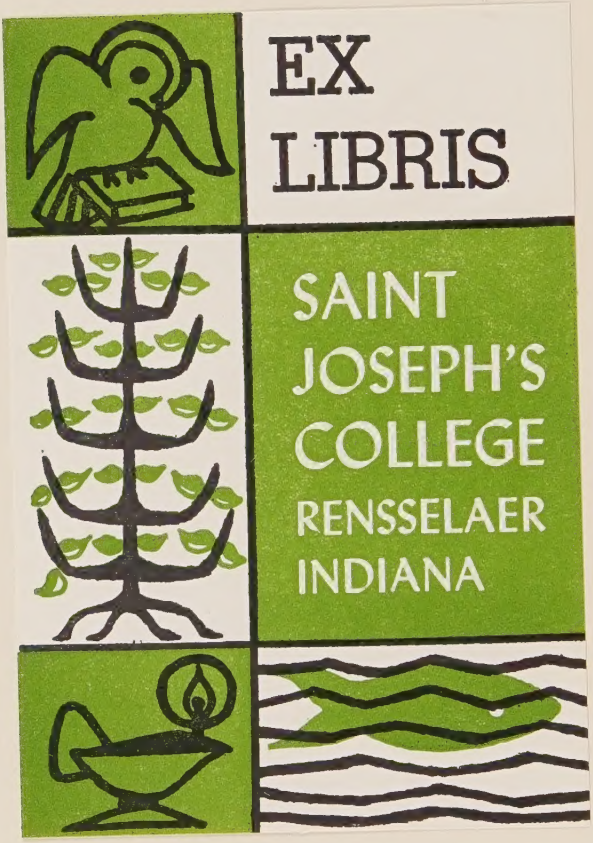
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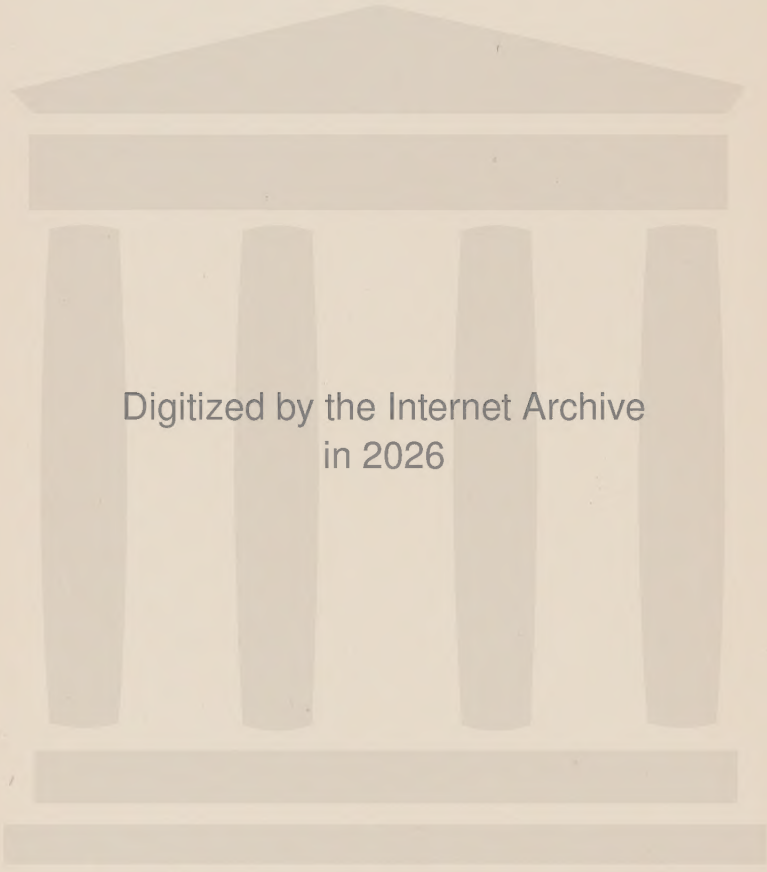
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VOLUME VIII

BERTHOLD AUERBACH

JEREMIAS GOTTHELF

FRITZ REUTER

ADALBERT STIFTER

WILHELM HEINRICH RIEHL

PERMISSION FRANZ HANFSTAENGL, NEW YORK

The German Classics

OF

The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

Masterpieces of German Literature

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

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VOLUME VIII

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Little Barefoot.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

This volume, containing chiefly masterpieces of the Novel of Provincial Life, is illustrated by the principal works of one of the foremost painters of German peasant life, Benjamin Vautier. These pictures have been so arranged as to bring out in natural succession typical situations in the career of an individual from the cradle to the grave. In order not to interrupt this succession, Auerbach's *Little Barefoot,* likewise illustrated by Vautier, has been placed before Gotthelf's *Uli, The Farmhand,* although Gotthelf, and not Auerbach, is to be considered as the real founder of the German village story.

The frontispiece, Karl Spitzweg's *Garret Window,* introduces a master of German genre painting who in a later volume will be more fully represented.

Kuno Francke.

THE NOVEL OF PROVINCIAL LIFE

By Edwin C. Roedder, Ph. D.

Associate Professor of German Philology, University of Wisconsin

TO ROUSSEAU belongs the credit of having given, in his passionate cry "Back to Nature!" the classic expression to the consciousness that all the refinements of civilization do not constitute life in its truest sense. The sentiment itself is thousands of years old. It had inspired the idyls of Theocritus in the midst of the magnificence and luxury of the courts of Alexandria and Syracuse. It reëchoed through the pages of Virgil's bucolic poetry. It made itself heard, howsoever faintly, in the artificiality and sham of the pastoral plays from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. And it was but logical that this sentiment should seek its most adequate and definitive expression in a portrayal of all phases of the life and fate of those who, as the tillers of the soil, had ever remained nearer to Mother Earth than the rest of humankind.

Not suddenly, then, did rural poetry rise into being; but while its origin harks back to remote antiquity it has found its final form only during the last century. In this its last, as well as its most vigorous, offshoot, it presents itself as the village story — as we shall term it for brevity's sake — which has won a permanent place in literature by the side of its older brothers and sisters, and has even entirely driven out the fanciful pastoral or village idyl of old.

The village story was bound to come in the nineteenth

century, even if there had been no beginnings of it in earlier times, and even if it did not correspond to a deep-rooted general sentiment. The eighteenth century had allowed the Third Estate to gain a firm foothold in the domain of dignified letters; the catholicity of the nineteenth admitted the laborer and the proletarian. It would have been passing strange if the rustic alone had been denied the privilege. An especially hearty welcome was accorded to the writings of the first representatives of the new species. Internationalism, due to increased traffic, advanced with unparalleled strides in the third and fourth decades. The seclusion of rural life seemed to remain the quiet and unshakable realm of patriarchal virtue and venerable tradition. The political skies were overcast with the thunder clouds of approaching revolutions; France had just passed through another violent upheaval. Village conditions seemed to offer a veritable haven of refuge. The pristine artlessness of the peasant's intellectual, moral, and emotional life furnished a wholesome antidote to the morbid hyperculture of dying romanticism, the controversies and polemics of Young Germany, and the self-adulation of the society of the salons. Neither could the exotic, ethnographic, and adventure narratives in the manner of Sealsfield, at first enthusiastically received, satisfy the taste of the reading public for any length of time — at best, these novels supplanted one fashion by another, if, indeed, they did not drive out Satan by means of Beelzebub. And was it wise to roam so far afield when the real good was so close at hand? Why cross oceans when the land of promise lay right before one's doors? All that was needed was the poet discoverer.

The Columbus of this new world shared the fate of the great Genoese in more than one respect. Like him, he set out in quest of shores that he was destined never to reach. Like him, he discovered, or rather rediscovered, a new land. Like him, he so far outstripped his forerunners that they sank into oblivion. Like Columbus, who died without

knowing that he had not reached India, the land of his dreams, but found a new world, he may have departed from this life in the belief that he had been a measurably successful social reformer when he had proved to be a great epic poet. Like Columbus, he was succeeded by his Amerigo Vespucci, after whom his discovery was named. The Columbus of the village story is the Swiss clergyman Albert Bitzius, better known by his assumed name as Jeremias Gotthelf; the Amerigo Vespucci is his contemporary Berthold Auerbach.

The choice of his *nom de guerre* is significant of Jeremias Gotthelf's literary activity. He regarded himself as the prophet wailing the misery of his people, who could be delivered only through the aid of the Almighty. It never occurred to him to strive for literary fame. He considered himself as a teacher and preacher purely and simply; in a measure, as the successor of Pestalozzi, who, in his *Lienhard und Gertrud* (1781–1789), had created a sort of pedagogical classic for the humbler ranks of society; and if there be such a thing in Gotthelf's make-up as literary influence, it must have emanated from the sage of Burgdorf and Yverdun. To some extent also Johann Peter Hebel (1760–1826), justly famed for his Alemannian dialect poems, may have served him as a model, for Hebel followed an avowedly educational purpose in the popular tales of his *Schatzkästlein des rheinischen Hausfreunds* ("Treasure Box of the Rhenish Crony"), of which it has been said that they outweigh tons of novels.

Gotthelf's intention was twofold: to champion the cause of the rustic yeomanry in the threatening of its peculiar existence — for the radical spirit of the times was already seizing and preying upon the hallowed customs of the peasantry's life — and to fight against certain inveterate vices of the rural population itself that seemed to be indigenous to the soil. As the first great social writer of the German tongue, he is not content to make the rich answer-

able for existing conditions, but labors with all earnestness to educate the lower classes toward self-help. At first he appeared as an uncommonly energetic, conservative, polemic author in whose views the religious basis of life and genuine moral worth coincided with the traditional character of the country yeomanry. A more thorough examination revealed to his readers an original epic talent of stupendous powers. He was indeed eminently fitted to be an educator and reformer among his flock by his own nobility of character, his keen knowledge and sane judgment of the people's real needs and wants, his warm feeling, and his unexcelled insight into the peasant's inner life. Beyond that, however, he was gifted with exuberant poetic imagination and creative power, with an intuitive knowledge of the subtlest workings of the emotional life, and a veritable genius for finding the critical moments in an individual existence.

So it came about that the poet triumphed over the social reformer, in spite of himself; and while in his own parish, at Lützelflüh in the Canton of Berne — where he was installed as minister of the Gospel in 1832 after having spent some time there as a vicar — he is remembered to this day for his self-sacrificing activity in every walk of life, the world at large knows him only as one of the great prose writers of Germany in the nineteenth century. His first work, *Bauernspiegel* ("The Peasants' Mirror"), was published in 1836, when he was thirty-nine years old. From that time on until his death in 1854, his productivity was most marvelous. *The Peasants' Mirror* is the first village story that deserves the name; here, for the first time, the world of the peasant was presented as a distinct world by itself.* It is at the same time one of the earliest, as well as the most splendid, products of realistic art; and, con-

* This peculiarity distinguishes Gotthelf's *Bauernspiegel* from the nearly contemporary *Oberhof*, the episode of Immermann's *Münchhausen* which is intended as a popular contrast to the aristocratic society represented in the larger part of that novel. *Cf.* Vol. vii, p. 169.

sidered in connection with his later writings, must be regarded as his creed and program. For the motives of the several chapters reappear later, worked out into complete books, and thus both *Uli der Knecht* ("Uli, the Farmhand," 1841) and *Uli der Pächter* ("Uli, the Tenant," 1849) are foreshadowed here.

As a literary artist Gotthelf shows barely any progress in his whole career, and intentionally so. Few writers of note have been so perfectly indifferent to matters of form. The same Gottfried Keller who calls Gotthelf "without exception the greatest epic genius that has lived in a long time, or perhaps will live for a long time to come," characterizes him thus as to his style: "With his strong, sharp spade he will dig out a large piece of soil, load it on his literary wheelbarrow, and to the accompaniment of strong language upset it before our feet; good garden soil, grass, flowers and weeds, manure and stones, precious gold coins and old shoes, fragments of crockery and bones—they all come to light and mingle their sweet and foul smells in peaceful harmony." His adherence to the principle *Naturalia non sunt turpia* is indeed so strict that at times a sensitive reader is tempted to hold his nose. It is to be regretted that so great a genius in his outspoken preference for all that is characteristic should have been so partial to the rude, the crude, and the brutal. For Gotthelf's literary influence—which, to be sure, did not make itself felt at once—has misled many less original writers to consider these qualities as essential to naturalistic style.

Very largely in consequence of his indifference to form and the naturalistic tendencies mentioned—for to all intents and purposes Gotthelf must be regarded as the precursor of naturalism— the Swiss writer did not gain immediate recognition in the world of letters, and the credit rightfully belonging to him fell, as already mentioned, to Berthold Auerbach (1812–1882), a native of the village of Nordstetten in the Württemberg portion of the Black

Forest. From 1843–1853 Auerbach published his *Black Forest Village Stories,* which at once became the delight of the reading public. Auerbach himself claimed the distinction of being the originator of this new species of narrative — an honor which was also claimed by Alexander Weill, because of his *Sittengemälde aus dem Elsass* ("Genre Paintings from Alsace," 1843). While Gotthelf had written only for his peasants, without any regard for others, Auerbach wrote for the same general readers of fiction as the then fashionable writers did. So far as his popularity among the readers of the times and his influence on other authors are concerned, Auerbach has a certain right to the coveted title, for a whole school of village novelists followed at his heels; and his name must remain inseparably connected with the history of the novel of provincial life. The impression his stories made everywhere was so strong as to beggar description. They afforded the genuine delight that we get from murmuring brooks and flowering meadows — although the racy smell of the soil that is wafted toward us from the pages of Gotthelf's writings is no doubt more wholesome for a greater length of time. Auerbach has often been charged with idealizing his peasants too much. It must be admitted that his method and style are idealistic, but, at least in his best works, no more so than is compatible with the demands of artistic presentation. He does not, like Gotthelf, delight in painting a face with all its wrinkles, warts, and freckles, but works more like the portrait painter who will remove unsightly blemishes by retouching the picture without in any way sacrificing its lifelike character. When occasion demands he also shows himself capable of handling thoroughly tragic themes with pronounced success. In his later years, it is true, he fell into mannerism, overemphasized his inclination toward didacticism and sententiousness, and allowed the philosopher to run away with the poet by making his peasant folk think and speak as though they

were adepts in the system of Spinoza, with which Auerbach himself, being of Jewish birth and having been educated to be a rabbi, was intimately familiar. On the whole, however, the lasting impression we obtain from Auerbach's literary work remains a very pleasant one — that of a rich and characteristic life, sound to the core, vigorous and buoyant.

Not as a writer of village stories — for in the portrayal of the rustic population, as such, he was not concerned — but in his basic purpose of holding up nature, pure and holy, as an ideal, Adalbert Stifter (1805–1868), an Austrian, must be assigned a place of honor in this group. A more incisive contrast to the general turbulence of the forties could hardly be imagined than is found in the nature descriptions and idyls of this quietist, who "from the madding crowd's ignoble strife" sought refuge in the stillness of the country and among people to whom such outward peace is a physical necessity. His feeling for nature, especially for her minutest and seemingly most insignificant phenomena, is closely akin to religion; there is an infinite charm in his description of the mysterious life of apparently lifeless objects; he renders all the sensuous impressions so masterfully that the reader often has the feeling of a physical experience; and it is but natural that up to his thirty-fifth year, before he discovered his literary talent, he had dreamed of being a landscape painter. Hebbel's epigram, "Know ye why ye are such past masters in painting beetles and buttercups? 'Tis because ye know not man; 'tis because ye see not the stars," utterly fails to do justice to Stifter's poetic individuality. But in avoiding the great tempests and serious conflicts of the human heart he obeyed a healthy instinct of his artistic genius, choosing to retain undisputed mastery in his own field.

It is, of course, an impossibility to treat adequately, in the remainder of the space at our disposal, the poetic and general literary merit of Fritz Reuter (1810–1874), the great regenerator and rejuvenator of Low German as a

literary language. His lasting merit in the field of the village story is that by his exclusive use of dialect he threw an effective safeguard around the naturalness of the emotional life of his characters, and through this ingenious device will for all time to come serve as a model to writers in this particular domain. For dialectic utterance does not admit of any super-exaltation of sentiment; at any rate, it helps to detect such at first glance. But there are other features no less meritorious in his stories of rural life, chief of which is that unique blending of seriousness and humor that makes us laugh and cry at the same time. With his wise and kind heart, with his deep sympathy for all human suffering, with the smile of understanding for everything truly human, also for all the limitations and follies of human nature, Reuter has worthily taken his place by the side of his model, Charles Dickens. It is questionable whether even Dickens ever created a character equal to the fine and excellent Uncle Bräsig, who, in the opinion of competent critics, is the most successful humorous figure in all German literature. Bräsig is certainly a masterpiece of psychology; as remote from any mere comic effect, despite his idiosyncrasies, as from maudlin sentimentality; an impersonation of sturdy manhood and a victor in life's battles, no less than his creator, who, although he had lost seven of the most precious years of his life in unjust imprisonment and even had been under sentence of death for a crime of which he knew himself to be absolutely innocent, had not allowed his fate to make him a pessimist. Nor does the central theme and idea of his masterpiece *Ut mine Stromtid* ("From my Roaming Days," 1862), in its strength and beauty, deserve less praise than the character delineation. Four years previous, in *Kein Hüsung* ("Homeless") the author had raised a bitter cry of distress over the social injustice and the deceit and arrogance of the ruling classes. In spite of a ray of sunshine at the end, the treatment was essentially tragic. Now he has found a harmonious solution of the problem; the true

nobility of human nature triumphs over all social distinctions; aristocracy of birth and yeomanry are forever united. Thus the marriage of Louise Havermann with Franz von Rambow both symbolizes the fusion of opposing social forces and exemplifies the lofty teaching of Gotthelf —"The light that is to illumine our fatherland must have its birth at a fireside." With his gospel of true humanity the North German poet supplements and brings to its full fruition the religious austerity of the doctrines and precepts of Jeremias Gotthelf, the preacher on the Alpine heights of Switzerland.

BERTHOLD AUERBACH

LITTLE BAREFOOT* (1856)

A Tale of Village Life

TRANSLATED BY H. W. DULCKEN, PH.D.

REVISED AND ABRIDGED BY PAUL BERNARD THOMAS

Chapter I

THE CHILDREN KNOCK AT THE DOOR

EARLY in the morning through the autumnal mist two children of six or seven years are wending their way, hand in hand, along the garden-paths outside the village. The girl, evidently the elder of the two, carries a slate, school-books, and writing materials under her arm; the boy has a similar equipment, which he carries in an open gray linen bag slung across his shoulder. The girl wears a cap of white twill, that reaches almost to her forehead, and from beneath it the outline of her broad brow stands forth prominently; the boy's head is bare. Only one child's step is heard, for while the boy has strong shoes on, the girl is barefoot. Wherever the path is broad enough, the children walk side by side, but where the space between the hedges is too narrow for this, the girl walks ahead.

The white hoar frost has covered the faded leaves of the bushes, and the haws and berries; and the hips especially, standing upright on their bare stems, seem coated with

* *Editor's note.*— Numerous omissions have been made in the course of the narrative, reducing the length of the original text by about one fifth. Wherever necessary for the continuity of the story, the essence of the excluded portions has been supplied by synopses. These synopses are printed enclosed in brackets.

Permission Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd., London.

BERTHOLD AUERBACH

HANS MEYER

silver. The sparrows in the hedges twitter and fly away in restless groups at the children's approach; then they settle down not far off, only to go whirring up again, till at last they flutter into a garden and alight in an apple-tree with such force that the leaves come showering down. A magpie flies up suddenly from the path and shoots across to the large pear-tree, where some ravens are perched in silence. The magpie must have told them something, for the ravens fly up and circle round the tree; one old fellow perches himself on the waving crown, while the others find good posts of observation on the branches below. They, too, are doubtless curious to know why the children, with their school things, are following the wrong path and going out of the village; one raven, indeed, flies out as a scout and perches on a stunted willow by the pond. The children, however, go quietly on their way till, by the alders beside the pond, they come upon the high-road, which they cross to reach a humble house standing on the farther side. The house is locked up, and the children stand at the door and knock gently. The girl cries bravely: "Father! mother!" —and the boy timidly repeats it after her: "Father! mother!" Then the girl takes hold of the frost-covered latch and presses it, at first gently, and listens; the boards of the door creak, but there is no other result. And now she ventures to rattle the latch up and down vigorously, but the sounds die away in the empty vestibule—no human voice answers. The boy then presses his mouth to a crack in the door and cries: "Father! mother!" He looks up inquiringly at his sister—his breath on the door has also turned to hoar frost.

From the village, lying in a shroud of mist, come the measured sounds of the thresher's flail, now in sudden volleys, now slowly and with a dragging cadence, now in sharp, crackling bursts, and now again with a dull and hollow beat. Sometimes there is the noise of one flail only, but presently others have joined in on all sides. The children stand still and seem lost. Finally they stop knocking and

calling, and sit down on some uprooted tree-stumps. The latter lie in a heap around the trunk of a mountain-ash which stands beside the house, and which is now radiant with its red berries. The children's eyes are again turned toward the door — but it is still locked.

"Father got those out of the Mossbrook Wood," said the girl, pointing to the stumps; and she added with a precocious look: "They give out lots of heat, and are worth quite a little; for there is a good deal of resin in them, and that burns like a torch. But chopping them brings in the most money."

"If I were already grown up," replied the boy, "I'd take father's big ax, and the beechwood mallet, and the two iron wedges, and the ash wedge and break it all up as if it were glass. And then I'd make a fine, pointed heap of it like the charcoal-burner, Mathew, makes in the woods; and when father comes home, how pleased he'll be! But you must not tell him who did it!" the boy concluded, raising a warning finger at his sister.

She seemed to have a dawning suspicion that it was useless to wait there for their father and mother, for she looked up at her brother very sadly. When her glance fell on his shoes, she said:

"Then you must have father's boots, too. But come, we will play ducks and drakes — you shall see that I can throw farther than you!"

As they walked away, the girl said:

"I'll give you a riddle to guess: What wood will warm you without your burning it?"

"The schoolmaster's ruler, when you get the spatters," answered the boy.

"No, that's not what I mean: The wood that you chop makes you warm without your burning it." And pausing by the hedge, she asked again:

"On a stick he has his head, And his jacket it is red, And filled with stone is he — Now who may he be?"

The boy bethought himself very gravely, and cried:

"Stop! You mustn't tell me what it is!—Why, its a hip!"

The girl nodded assentingly, and made a face as if this were the first time she had ever given him the riddle to guess; as a matter of fact, however, she had given it to him very often, and had used it many times to cheer him up.

The sun had dispersed the mist, and the little valley stood in glittering sheen, as the children turned away to the pond to skim flat stones on the water. As they passed the house the girl pressed the latch once more; but again the door did not open, nor was anything to be seen at the window. And now the children played merrily beside the pond, and the girl seemed quite content that her brother should be the more clever at the sport, and that he should boast of it and grow quite excited over it; indeed, she manifestly tried to be less clever at it than she really was, for the stones she threw almost always plumped down to the bottom as soon as they struck the water—for which she got properly laughed at by her companion. In the excitement of the sport the children quite forgot where they were and why they had come there—and yet it was a strange and sorrowful occasion.

In the house, which was now so tightly locked up, there had lived, but a short time before, one Josenhans, with his wife and their two children, Amrei (Anna Marie) and Damie (Damien). The father was a woodcutter in the forest, and was, moreover, an adept at various kinds of work; the house, which was in a dilapidated state when he bought it, he had himself repaired and reroofed, and in the autumn he was going to whitewash it inside—the lime was already lying prepared in the trench, covered with withered branches. His wife was one of the best day-laboring women in the village—ready for anything, day and night, in weal and in woe; for she had trained her children, especially Amrei, to manage for themselves at an early age. Industry and frugal contentment made the house one of the happiest in the village. Then came a deadly sickness which snatched

away the mother, and the following evening, the father; and a few days later two coffins were carried away from the little house. The children had been taken immediately into the next house, to "Coaly Mathew," and they did not know of their parents' death until they were dressed in their Sunday clothes to follow the bodies.

Josenhans and his wife had no near relations in the place, but there was, nevertheless, loud weeping heard, and much mournful praise of the dead couple. The village magistrate walked with one of the children at each hand behind the two coffins. Even at the grave the children were quiet and unconscious, indeed, almost cheerful, though they often asked for their father and mother. They dined at the magistrate's house, and everybody was exceedingly kind to them; and when they got up from the table, each one received a parcel of cakes to take away.

But that evening, when, according to an arrangement of the village authorities, "Crappy Zachy" came to get Damie, and Black Marianne called for Amrei, the children refused to separate from each other, and cried aloud, and wanted to go home. Damie soon allowed himself to be pacified by all sorts of promises, but Amrei obliged them to use force — she would not move from the spot, and the magistrate's foreman had to carry her in his arms into Black Marianne's house. There she found her own bed — the one she had used at home — but she would not lie down on it. Finally, however, exhausted by crying, she fell asleep on the floor and was put to bed in her clothes. Damie, too, was heard weeping aloud at Crappy Zachy's, and even screaming pitiably, but soon after he was silent.

The much-defamed Black Marianne, on the other hand, showed on this first evening how quietly anxious she was about her foster-child. For many, many years she had not had a child about her, and now she stood before the sleeping girl and said, almost aloud:

"Happy sleep of childhood! Happy children who can

BENJAMIN VAUTIER

TWO COFFINS WERE CARRIED AWAY FROM THE LITTLE HOUSE

be crying, and before you look around they are asleep, without worry or restless tossing!"

She sighed deeply.

The next morning Amrei went early to her brother to help him dress himself, and consoled him concerning what had happened to him, declaring that when their father came home he would pay off Crappy Zachy. Then the two children went out to their parents' house, knocked at the door and wept aloud, until Coaly Mathew, who lived near there, came and took them to school. He asked the master to explain to the children that their parents were dead, because he himself could not make it clear to them — Amrei especially seemed determined not to understand it. The master did all he could, and the children became quiet. But from the school they went back to the empty house and waited there, hungry and forsaken, until they were fetched away.

Josenhans' house was taken by the mortgagee, and the payment the deceased had made upon it was lost; for the value of houses had decreased enormously through emigration; many houses in the village stood empty, and Josenhans' dwelling also remained unoccupied. All the movable property had been sold, and a small sum had thus been realized for the children, but it was not nearly enough to pay for their board; they were consequently parish children, and as such were placed with those who would take them at the cheapest rate.

One day Amrei announced gleefully to her brother that she knew where their parents' cuckoo-clock was — Coaly Mathew had bought it. And that very evening the children stood outside the house and waited for the cuckoo to sing; and when it did, they laughed aloud.

And every morning the children went to the old house, and knocked, and played beside the pond, as we saw them doing today. Now they listen, for they hear a sound that is not often heard at this season of the year — the cuckoo at Coaly Mathew's is singing eight times.

"We must go to school," said Amrei, and she turned quickly with her brother through the garden-path back into the village. As they passed Farmer Rodel's barn, Damie said:

"They've threshed a great deal at our guardian's today." And he pointed to the bands of threshed sheaves that hung over the half-door of the barn, as evidence of accomplished work. Amrei nodded silently.

Chapter II

THE DISTANT SOUL

Farmer Rodel, whose house with its red beams and its pious text in a large heart over the door, was not far from Josenhans's had let himself be appointed guardian of the orphan children by the Village Council. He made the less objection for the reason that Josenhans had, in former days, served as second-man on his farm. His guardianship, however, was practically restricted to his taking care of the father's unsold clothes, and to his occasionally asking one of the children, as he passed by: "Are you good?" —whereupon he would march off without even waiting for an answer. Nevertheless a strange feeling of pride came over the children when they heard that the rich farmer was their guardian, and they looked upon themselves as very fortunate people, almost aristocratic. They often stood near the large house and looked up at it expectantly, as if they were waiting for something and knew not what; and often, too, they sat by the plows and harrows near the barn and read the biblical text on the house over and over again. The house seemed to speak to them, if no one else did.

It was the Sunday before All Souls' Day, and the children were again playing before the locked house of their parents,—they seemed to love the spot,—when Farmer

Landfried's wife came down the road from Hochdorf, with a large red umbrella under her arm, and a hymn-book in her hand. She was paying a final visit to her native place; for the day before the hired-man had already carried her household furniture out of the village in a four-horse wagon, and early the next morning she was to move with her husband and her three children to the farm they had just bought in distant Allgau. From way up by the mill Dame Landfried was already nodding to the children — for to meet children on first going out is, they say, a good sign — but the children could not see her nodding, nor could they see her sorrowful features. At last, when she drew near to them, she said:

"God greet ye, children! What are you doing here so early? To whom do you belong?"

"To Josenhans — there!" answered Amrei, pointing to the house.

"Oh, you poor children!" cried the woman, clasping her hands. "I should have known you, my girl, for your mother, when she went to school with me, looked just as you do — we were good companions; and your father served my cousin, Farmer Rodel. I know all about you. But tell me, Amrei, why have you no shoes on? You might take cold in such weather as this! Tell Marianne that Dame Landfried of Hochdorf told you to say, it is not right of her to let you run about like this! But no — you needn't say anything — I will speak to her myself. But, Amrei, you are a big girl now, and must be sensible and look out for yourself. Just think — what would your mother say, if she knew that you were running about barefoot at this season of the year?"

The child looked at the speaker with wide-open eyes, as if to say: "Doesn't my mother know anything about it?"

But the woman continued:

"That's the worst of it, that you poor children cannot know what virtuous parents you had, and therefore older people must tell you. Remember that you will give real,

true happiness to your parents, when they hear, yonder in heaven, how the people down here on earth are saying: 'The Josenhans children are models of all goodness — one can see in them the blessing of honest parents.'"

The tears poured down the woman's cheeks as she spoke these last words. The feeling of grief in her soul, arising from quite another cause, burst out irresistibly at these words and thoughts; there was sorrow for herself mingled with pity for others. She laid her hand upon the head of the girl, who, when she saw the woman weeping, also began to weep bitterly; she very likely felt that this was a good soul inclining toward her, and a dawning consciousness began to steal over her that she had really lost her parents.

Suddenly the woman's face seemed irradiated. She raised her still tearful eyes to heaven, and said:

"Gracious God, Thou givest me the thought." Then, turning to the child, she went on: "Listen — I will take you with me. My Lisbeth was just your age when she was taken from me. Tell me, will you go with me to Allgau and live with me?"

"Yes," replied Amrei, decidedly.

Then she felt herself nudged and seized from behind.

"You must not!" cried Damie, throwing his arms around her — and he was trembling all over.

"Be still," said Amrei, to soothe him. "The kind woman will take you too. Damie is to go with us, is he not?"

"No, child, that cannot be — I have boys enough."

"Then I'll not go either," said Amrei, and she took Damie by the hand.

There is a kind of shudder, wherein a fever and a chill seem to be quarreling — the joy of doing something and the fear of doing it. One of these peculiar shudders passed through the strange woman, and she looked down upon the child with a certain sense of relief. In a moment of sympathy, urged on by a pure impulse to do a kind deed, she had proposed to undertake a task and to assume a responsibility,

the significance and weight of which she had not sufficiently considered; and, furthermore, she had not taken into account what her husband would think of her taking such a step without her having spoken to him about it. Consequently when the child herself refused, a reaction set in, and it all became clear to her; so that she at once acquiesced, with a certain sense of relief, in the refusal of her offer. She had obeyed an impulse of her heart by wishing to do this thing, and now that obstacles stood in the way, she felt rather glad that it was to be left undone, and without her having been obliged to retract her promise.

"As you like," said the woman. "I will not try to persuade you. Who knows?—perhaps it is better that you should grow up first anyway. To learn to bear sorrow in youth is a good thing, and we easily get accustomed to better times; all those who have turned out really well, were obliged to suffer some heavy crosses in their youth. Only be good, and keep this in remembrance, that, so long as you are good, and so long as God grants me life, there shall always be, for your parents' sake, a shelter for you with me. But now, it's just as well as it is. Wait! I will give you something to remember me by." She felt in her pockets; but suddenly she put her hand up to her neck and said: "No, you shall have this!" Then she blew on her fingers, which were stiff with the cold, until they were nimble enough to permit her to unclasp from her neck a necklace of five rows of garnets, with a Swedish ducat hanging from them; and she fastened the ornament around the child's neck, kissing her at the same time.

Amrei watched all this as if spell-bound.

"For you I unfortunately have nothing," said the good woman to Damie, who was breaking a switch he had in his hand into little pieces. "But I will send you a pair of leather breeches belonging to my John—they are quite good still and you can wear them when you grow bigger. And now, God keep you, dear children. If possible, I shall come to you again, Amrei. At any rate, send Marianne to

me after church. Be good children, both of you, and pray heartily for your parents in eternity. And don't forget that you still have protectors, both in heaven and on earth."

The farmer's wife, who, to walk the faster, had tucked her dress up all around, let it down now that she was at the entrance of the village. With hurried steps she went along the street, and did not look back again.

Amrei put her hands up to her neck and bent down her face, wishing to examine the coin; but she could not quite succeed. Damie was chewing on the last piece of his switch; when his sister looked at him and saw tears in his eyes, she said:

"You shall see — you'll get the finest pair of breeches in the village!"

"And I won't take them!" cried Damie, and he spat out a bit of wood.

"And I'll tell her that she must buy you a knife too. I shall stay home all day today — she's coming to see us."

"Yes, if she were only there already," replied Damie without knowing what he said; for a feeling that he had been slighted made him jealous and reproachful.

The first bell was ringing, and the children hastened back to the village. Amrei, with a brief explanation, gave the newly-acquired trinket to Marianne, who said:

"On my word, you are a lucky child! I'll take good care of it for you. Now make haste to church."

All during the service the children kept glancing across at Farmer Landfried's wife, and when they came out they waited for her at the door; but the wealthy farmer's wife was surrounded by so many people, all eagerly talking to her, that she was obliged to keep turning in a circle to answer first one and then another. She had no opportunity to notice the wistful glances of the children and their continual nodding. Dame Landfried had Rosie, Farmer Rodel's youngest daughter, in her hand. Rosie was a year older than Amrei, who involuntarily kept moving her hand, as though she would have pushed aside the intruder who was

taking her place. Had the well-to-do farmer's wife eyes for Amrei only out by the last house, and when they were alone, and did she not know her when other people were present? Are only the children of rich people noticed then, and the children of relatives?

Amrei was startled when she suddenly heard this thought, which had begun to stir gently within her, uttered aloud; it was Damie who uttered it. And while she followed at a distance the large group of people surrounding the farmer's wife, she strove to drive the bad thought out of her brother's mind, as well as out of her own. Dame Landfried at last disappeared into Farmer Rodel's house, and the children quietly turned back.

Suddenly Damie said:

"If she comes to you, you must tell her to go to Crappy Zachy too, and tell him to be good to me."

Amrei nodded; and then the children parted, and went to the separate houses where they had found shelter.

The clouds, which had lifted in the morning, came back in the afternoon in the shape of a perfect downpour of rain. Dame Landfried's large red umbrella was seen here and there around the village, almost hiding the figure beneath it. Black Marianne had not been able to find her, and she said on her return home:

"She can come to me—I don't want anything of her."

The two children wandered out to their parents' house again and crouched down on the door-step, hardly speaking a word. Again the suspicion seemed to dawn upon them, that after all their parents would not come back. Then Damie tried to count the drops of rain that fell from the eaves; but they came down too quickly for him, and he made easy work of it by crying out all at once: "A thousand million!"

"She must come past here when she goes home," said Amrei, "and then we'll call out to her. Mind that you help me call, too, and then we'll have another talk with her."

So said Amrei; for the children were still waiting there for Dame Landfried.

The cracking of a whip sounded in the village. There was a trampling and splashing of horses' feet in the slushy street, and a carriage came rolling along.

"You shall see that it's father and mother coming in a coach to fetch us," cried Damie.

Amrei looked around at her brother mournfully, and said:

"Don't chatter so."

When she looked back again the carriage was quite near; somebody in it motioned from beneath a red umbrella, and away rolled the vehicle. Only Coaly Mathew's dog barked after it for a while, and acted as if he wanted to seize the spokes with his teeth; but at the pond he turned back again, barked once more in front of the door, and then slunk into the house.

"Hurrah! she's gone away!" cried Damie, as if he were glad of it. "It was Farmer Landfried's wife. Didn't you know Farmer Rodel's black horses? — they carried her off. Don't forget my leather breeches!" he cried at the top of his voice, although the carriage had already disappeared in the valley, and was presently seen creeping up the little hill by the Holderwasen.

The children returned quietly to the village. Who knows in what way this incident may take root in the inmost being, and what may sprout from it? For the present another feeling covers that of the first, bitter disappointment.

Chapter III

FROM THE TREE BY THE PARENTS' HOUSE

On the eve of All Souls' Day Black Marianne said to the children:

"Go, now, and gather some red berries, for we shall want them at the graveyard tomorrow."

"I know where to find them! I can get some!" cried Damie with genuine eagerness and joy. And away he ran out of the village, at such a pace that Amrei could hardly keep up with him; and when she arrived at their parents' house he was already up in the tree, teasing her in a boasting manner and calling for her to come up too—because he knew that she could not. And now he began to pluck the red berries and threw them down into his sister's apron. She asked him to pick them with their stems on, because she wanted to make a wreath. He answered, "No, I shan't!"—nevertheless no berries fell down after that without stems on them.

"Hark, how the sparrows are scolding!" cried Damie from the tree. "They're angry because I'm taking their food away from them!" And finally, when he had plucked all the berries, he said: "I shan't come down again, but shall stay up here day and night until I die and drop down, and shall never come to you at all any more, unless you promise me something!"

"What is it?"

"That you'll never wear the necklace that Farmer Landfried's wife gave you, so long as I can see it. Will you promise me that?"

"No!"

"Then I shall never come down!"

"Very well," said Amrei, and she went away with her berries. But before she had gone far, she sat down behind a pile of wood and started to make a wreath, every now and then peeping out to see if Damie was not coming. She put

the wreath on her head. Suddenly an indescribable anxiety about Damie seized her; she ran back, and there was Damie, sitting astride a branch and leaning back against the trunk of the tree with his arms folded.

"Come down! I'll promise you what you want!" cried Amrei; and in a moment Damie was down on the ground beside her.

When she got home, Black Marianne called her a foolish child and scolded her for making a wreath for herself out of the berries that were intended for her parents' graves. Marianne quickly destroyed the wreath, muttering a few words which the children could not understand. Then she took them both by the hand and led them out to the churchyard; and passing where two mounds lay close together, she said:

"There are your parents!"

The children looked at each other in surprise. Marianne then made a cross-shaped furrow in each of the mounds, and showed the children how to stick the berries in. Damie was handy at the work, and boasted because his red cross was finished sooner than his sister's. Amrei looked at him fixedly and made no answer; but when Damie said, "That will please father," she struck him on the back and said: "Be quiet!"

Damie began to cry, perhaps louder than he really meant to. Then Amrei called out:

"For heaven's sake, forgive me!—forgive me for doing that to you. Right here, I promise you that I'll do all I can for you, all my life long, and give you everything I have. I didn't hurt you, Damie, did I? You may depend upon it, it shall not happen again as long as I live—never again! —never! Oh, mother! Oh, father! I shall be good, I promise you! Oh, mother! Oh, father!"

She could say no more; but she did not weep aloud, although it was plain that her heart was almost bursting. Not until Black Marianne burst out crying did Amrei weep with her.

They returned home, and when Damie said "Good night," Amrei whispered into his ear:

"Now I know that we shall never see our parents again in this world."

Even from making this communication she derived a certain satisfaction — a childish pride which is awakened by having something to impart. And yet in this child's heart there had dawned something like a realization that one of the great ties in her life had been severed forever, the thought that arises with the consciousness that a parent is no longer with us.

When the lips which called thee child have been sealed by death, a breath has vanished from thy life that shall nevermore return.

While Black Marianne was sitting beside the child's bed, the little one said:

"I seem to be falling and falling, on and on. Let me keep hold of your hand."

Holding the hand fast, she dropped into a slumber; but as often as Black Marianne tried to draw her hand away, she clutched at it again. Marianne understood what this sensation of endless falling signified for the child; she felt in realizing her parents' death as if she were being wafted along, without knowing whence or whither.

It was not until nearly midnight that Marianne was able to quit the child's bedside, after she had repeated her usual twelve Paternosters over and over again, who knows how many times? A look of stern defiance was on the face of the sleeping child. She had laid one hand across her bosom; Black Marianne gently lifted it, and said, half-aloud, to herself:

"If there were only an eye to watch over thee and a hand to help thee all the time, as there is now in thy sleep, and to take the heaviness out of thy heart without thy knowing it! But nobody can do that — none but He alone. Oh, may He do unto my child in distant lands as I do unto this little one!"

Black Marianne was a shunned woman, that is to say, people were almost afraid of her, so harsh did she seem in her manner. Some eighteen years before she had lost her husband, who had been shot in an attempt which he had made with some companions to rob the stage-coach. Marianne was expecting a child to be born when the body of her husband, with its blackened face, was carried into the village; but she bore up bravely and washed the dead man's face as if she hoped, by so doing, to wash away his black guilt. Her three daughters died, and only the son, who was born soon afterward, lived to grow up. He turned out to be a handsome lad, though he had a strange, dark color in his face; he was now traveling abroad as a journeyman mason. For from the time of Brosi, and especially since that worthy man's son, Severin, had worked his way up to such high honor with the mallet, many of the young men in the village had chosen to follow the mason's calling. The children used to talk of Severin as if he were a prince in a fairy tale. And so Black Marianne's only child had, in spite of her remonstrances, become a mason, and was now wandering around the country. And she, who all her life long had never left the village, nor had ever desired to leave it, often declared that she seemed to herself like a hen that had hatched a duck's egg; but she was almost always clucking to herself about it.

One would hardly believe it, but Black Marianne was one of the most cheerful persons in the village; she was never seen to be sorrowful, for she did not like to have people pity her; and that is why they did not take to her. In the winter she was the most industrious spinner in the village, and in the summer, the busiest at gathering wood, a large part of which she was able to sell; and "my John"—for that was her surviving child's name—"my John" was always the subject of her conversation. She said that she had taken little Amrei to live with her, not from a desire to be kind, but in order that she might have some living being about her. She liked to appear rough before people, and

thus enjoyed, all the more, the proud consciousness of independence.

The exact opposite to her was Crappy Zachy, with whom Damie had found shelter. This worthy represented himself to people as a kind-hearted fellow who would give away anything he had; but as a matter of fact he bullied and ill-used his entire household, and especially Damie, for whose keep he received but a small sum of money. His real name was Zechariah, and he got his nickname from his once having brought home to his wife a couple of finely trussed pigeons to roast, but they were in fact a pair of plucked ravens, which in that part of the country are called "crappies." Crappy Zachy, who had a wooden leg, spent most of his time knitting woolen stockings and jackets; and with his knitting he used to sit about in the village wherever there was any opportunity to gossip. This gossiping, in the course of which he heard all sorts of news, was a source of some very profitable side-business for him. He was what they called the "marriage-maker" of the region; for in those parts, where there are large, separate estates, marriages are generally managed through agents, who find out accurately the relative circumstances of the prospective couples, and arrange everything beforehand. When a marriage of this kind had been brought about, Crappy Zachy used to play the fiddle at the wedding, for he had quite a reputation in the region as a fiddler; moreover, when his hands were tired from fiddling, he could play the clarionet and the horn. In fact, he was an undoubted genius.

Damie's whining and sensitive nature was very disgusting to Crappy Zachy, and he tried to cure him of it by giving him plenty to cry about and teasing him whenever he could.

Thus the two little stems which had sprouted in the same garden were transplanted into different soils. The position and the nature of the ground, and the qualities that were inherent in each stem, made them grow up very differently.

Chapter IV

"open, door"

All Souls' Day came. It was dull and foggy, and the children stood among a crowd of people assembled in the churchyard. Crappy Zachy had led Damie there by the hand, but Amrei had come alone, without Black Marianne; many were angry at the hard-hearted woman, while a few hit a part of the truth when they said that Marianne did not like to visit graves, because she did not know where her husband's grave was. Amrei was quiet and did not shed a tear, while Damie wept bitterly at the pitying remarks of the bystanders, more especially because Crappy Zachy had given him several sly pinches and pokes. For a time Amrei, in a dreamy, forgetful way, stood gazing at the lights on the heads of the graves, watching the flame consume the wax and the wick grow blacker and blacker, until at last the light was quite burnt out.

In the crowd a man, wearing handsome, town-made clothes and with a ribbon in his button-hole, was moving about here and there. It was the High Commissioner of Public Works, Severin, who, on a trip of inspection, had come to visit the graves of his parents, Brosi and Moni. His brothers and sisters and other relatives were constantly crowding around him with a kind of deferential respect; in fact, the usual reverence of the occasion was almost entirely diverted, nearly all the attention being fixed upon this stranger. Amrei also looked at him, and asked Crappy Zachy:

"Is that a bridegroom?"

"Why?"

"Because he has a ribbon in his button-hole."

Instead of answering her, the first thing that Crappy Zachy did was to go up to a group of people and tell them what a stupid speech the child had made; and from among the graves there arose a loud laugh over her foolishness. Only Farmer Rodel's wife said:

"I don't see anything foolish in that. Although it is a mark of honor that Severin has, it is after all a strange thing for him to go about in the churchyard with such a decoration on — in the place where we see what we are all coming to, whether in our lifetime we have worn clothes of silk or of homespun. It annoyed me to see him wear it in the church — a thing of that kind ought to be taken off when one goes to church, and more especially in the churchyard!"

The rumor of little Amrei's question must have penetrated to Severin himself, for he was seen to button his overcoat hastily, and as he did so he nodded at the child. Now he was heard to ask who she was, and as soon as he found out, he came hurrying across to the children beside the fresh graves, and said to Amrei:

"Come here, my child. Open your hand. Here is a ducat for you — buy what you want with it."

The child stared at him and did not answer. But scarcely had Severin turned his back when she called out to him, half-aloud:

"I won't take any presents!" — and she flung the ducat after him.

Several people who had seen this came up to Amrei and scolded her; and just as they were about to illuse her, she was again saved from their rough hands by Farmer Rodel's wife, who once before had protected her with words. But even she requested Amrei to go after Severin and at least thank him. But Amrei made no answer whatsoever; she remained obstinate, so that her protectress also left her. Only with considerable difficulty was the ducat found again, and a member of the Village Council, who was present, took charge of it in order to deliver it over to the child's guardian.

This incident gave Amrei a strange reputation in the village. People said she had lived only a few days with Black Marianne, and yet had already acquired that woman's manners. It was declared to be an unheard-of thing that

a child so sunk in poverty could be so proud, and she was scolded up hill and down dale for this pride, so that she became thoroughly aware of it, and in her young, childish heart there arose an attitude of defiance, a resolve to evince it all the more. Black Marianne, moreover, did her part to strengthen this state of mind, for she said: "Nothing more lucky can happen to a poor person than to be considered proud, for by that means he or she is saved from being trampled upon by everybody, and from being expected to offer thanks for such usage afterward."

In the winter Amrei was at Crappy Zachy's much of the time, for she was very fond of hearing him play the violin; yes, and Crappy Zachy on one occasion bestowed such high praise upon her as to say: "You are not stupid;" for Amrei, after listening to his playing for a long time, had remarked: "It's wonderful how a fiddle can hold its breath so long; I can't do that." And, on quiet winter nights at home, when Marianne told sparkling and horrifying goblin-stories, Amrei, when they were finished, would draw a deep breath and say: "Oh, Marianne, I must take breath now — I was obliged to hold my breath all the time you were speaking."

No one paid much attention to Amrei, and the child could dream away just as she had a mind to. Only the schoolmaster said once at a meeting of the Village Council, that he had never seen such a child — she was at once defiant and yielding, dreamy and alert. In truth, with all her childish self-forgetfulness, there was already developing in little Amrei a sense of responsibility, an attitude of self-defense in opposition to the world, its kindness and its malice. Damie, on the other hand, came crying and complaining to his sister upon every trifling occasion. He was, furthermore, always pitying himself, and when he was tumbled over by his playmates in their wrestling matches, he always whined: "Yes, because I am an orphan they beat me! Oh, if my father and mother knew of it!" — and then he cried twice as much over the injustice of it. Damie let everybody give

him things to eat, and thus became greedy, while Amrei was satisfied with a little, and thus acquired habits of moderation. Even the roughest boys were afraid of Amrei, although nobody knew how she had proved her strength, while Damie would run away from quite little boys. In school Damie was always up to mischief; he shuffled his feet and turned down the leaves of the books with his fingers as he read. Amrei, on the other hand, was always bright and attentive, though she often wept in the school, not for the punishment she herself received, but because Damie was so often punished.

Amrei could please Damie best by telling him the answers to riddles. The children still used to sit frequently by the house of their rich guardian, sometimes near the wagons, sometimes near the oven behind the house, where they used to warm themselves, especially in the autumn. Once Amrei asked:

"What's the best thing about an oven?"

"You know I can't guess anything," replied Damie, plaintively.

"Then I'll tell you:

> 'In the oven this is best, 'tis said,
> That it never itself doth eat the bread.'"

And then, pointing to the wagons before the house, Amrei asked:

"What's full of holes, and yet holds?"—and without waiting for a reply, she gave the answer: "A chain!"

"Now you must let me ask you these riddles," said Damie.

And Amrei replied: "Yes, you may ask them. But do you see those sheep coming yonder? Now I know another riddle."

"No!" cried Damie, "no! Two are enough for me—I can't remember three!"

"Yes, you must hear this one too, or else I'll take the others back!"

And Damie kept repeating to himself, anxiously: "A chain," "Eat it itself," while Amrei asked:

"On which side have sheep the most wool?"—Ba! ba! on the outside!" she sang merrily.

Damie now ran off to ask his playmates these riddles; he kept his fists tightly clenched, as if he were holding the riddles fast and was determined not to let them go. But when he got to his playmates, he remembered only the one about the chain; and Farmer Rodel's eldest son, whom he hadn't asked at all and who was much too old for that sort of thing, guessed the answer at once, and Damie ran back to his sister crying.

Little Amrei's cleverness at riddles soon began to be talked about in the village, and even rich, serious farmers, who seldom wasted many words on anybody, and least of all on a poor child, now and then condescended to ask little Amrei one. That she knew a great many herself was not strange, for she had probably learned them from Black Marianne; but that she was able to answer so many new ones caused general astonishment. Amrei would soon have been unable to go across the street or into the fields without being stopped and questioned, if she had not found out a remedy; she made it a rule that she would not answer a riddle for anybody, unless she might propose one in return, and she managed to think up such good ones that the people stood still as if spell-bound. Never had a poor child been so much noticed in the village as was this little Amrei. But, as she grew older, less attention was paid to her, for people look with sympathetic eyes only at the blossom and the fruit, and disregard the long period of transition during which the one is ripening into the other.

Before Amrei's school-days were over, Fate gave her a riddle that was difficult to solve.

The children had an uncle, a woodcutter, who lived some fifteen miles from Haldenbrunn, at Fluorn. They had seen him only once, and that was at their parents' funeral, when he had walked behind the magistrate, who had led the chil-

dren by the hand. After that time the children often dreamt about their uncle at Fluorn. They were often told that this uncle was like their father, which made them still more anxious to see him; for although they still believed at times that their father and mother would some day suddenly reappear — it could not be that they had gone away forever — still, as the years rolled on, they gradually became reconciled to giving up this hope, especially after they had over and over again put berries on the graves, and had long been able to read the two names on the same black cross. They also almost entirely forgot about the uncle in Fluorn, for during many years they had heard nothing of him.

But one day the children were called into their guardian's house, and there sat a tall, heavy man with a brown face.

"Come here, children," said this man, as the children entered. "Don't you know me?" He had a dry, harsh voice.

The children looked at him with wondering eyes. Perhaps some remembrance of their father's voice awoke within them. The man continued:

"I am your father's brother. Come here, Lisbeth, and you too, Damie."

"My name's not Lisbeth — my name's Amrei," said the girl; and she began to cry. She did not offer her hand to her uncle. A feeling of estrangement made her tremble, when her own uncle thus called her by a wrong name; she very likely felt that there could be no real affection for her in anybody who did not know her name.

"If you are my uncle, why don't you know my name?" asked Amrei.

"You are a stupid child! Go and offer him your hand immediately!" commanded Farmer Rodel. And then he said to the stranger, half in a whisper: "She's a strange child. Black Marianne, who, you know, is a peculiar sort of person, has put all sorts of odd notions into her head."

Amrei looked around in astonishment, and gave her hand

to her uncle, trembling. Damie, who had done so already, now said:

"Uncle, have you brought us anything?"

"I haven't much to bring. I bring myself, and you're to go with me. Do you know, Amrei, that it's not at all right for you not to like your uncle. You'd better come here and sit down beside me — nearer still. You see, your brother Damie is much more sensible. He looks more like our family, but you belong to us too."

A maid now came in with some man's clothing, which she laid on the table.

"These are your brother's clothes," said Farmer Rodel to the stranger; and the latter went on to say to Amrei:

"As you see, these are your father's clothes. We shall take them with us, and you shall go too — first to Fluorn, and then across the brook."

Amrei, trembling, touched her father's coat and his blue-striped vest. But the uncle lifted up the clothes, pointed to the worn-out elbows, and said to Farmer Rodel:

"These are worth very little — I won't have them valued at much. I don't even know if I can wear them over in America, without being laughed at."

Amrei seized the coat passionately. That her father's coat, which she had looked upon as a costly and invaluable treasure, should be pronounced of little value, seemed to grieve her, and that these clothes were to be worn in America, and ridiculed there, almost bewildered her. And, anyway, what was the meaning of this talk about America?

This mystery was soon cleared up, when Farmer Rodel's wife came, and with her, Black Marianne; for Dame Rodel said:

"Harkye, husband — to my mind this thing should not be done so fast, this sending the children off to America with that man."

"But he is their only living relative, Josenhans' brother."

"Yes, to be sure. But until now he has not done much to show that he is a relative; and I fancy that this cannot

be done without the approval of the Council, and even the Council cannot do it alone. The children have a legal right to live here, which cannot be taken away from them in their sleep, so to speak — for the children are not yet in a position to say what they want themselves. It's like carrying people off in their sleep."

"My Amrei is intelligent enough. She's thirteen now, but more clever than many a person of thirty, and she knows what she wants," said Black Marianne.

"You two ought to have been town-councilors," said Farmer Rodel. "But it's my opinion, too, that the children ought not to be tied to a rope, like calves, and dragged away. Well, let the man talk with them himself, and then we shall see what further is to be done. He is after all their natural protector, and has the right to stand in their father's place, if he likes. Harkye; do you take a little walk with your brother's children outside the village, and you women stay here, and let nobody try to persuade or dissuade them."

The woodcutter took the two children by the hand, and went out of the room and out of the house with them. In the street he asked the children:

"Whither shall we go?"

"If you want to be our father, go home with us," suggested Damie. "Our house is down yonder."

"Is it open?" asked the uncle.

"No, but Coaly Mathew has the key. But he has never let us go in. I'll run on and get the key."

Damie released himself quickly, and ran off. Amrei felt like a prisoner as her uncle led her along by the hand. He spoke earnestly and confidentially to her now, however, and explained, almost as if he were excusing himself, that he had a large family of his own and that he could hardly get along with his wife and five children. But now a man, who was the owner of large forests in America, had offered him a free passage across the ocean, and in five years, when he had cleared away the forest, he was to have a large

piece of the best farm-land as his own property. In gratitude to God, who had bestowed this upon him for himself and his family, he had immediately made up his mind to do a good deed by taking his brother's children with him. But he was not going to compel them to go; indeed, he would take them only on the condition that they should turn to him with their whole hearts and look upon him as their second father.

Amrei looked at him with eyes of wonder. If she could only bring herself to love this man! But she was almost afraid of him — she could not help it. And to have him thus fall from the clouds, as it were, and compel her to love him, rather turned her against him.

"Where is your wife?" asked Amrei. She very likely felt that a woman would have broached the subject in a more gentle and gradual manner.

"I will tell you honestly," answered her uncle. "My wife does not interfere in this matter, and says she will neither persuade nor dissuade me. She is a little sharp, but only at first — if you are good to her, and you are a sensible child, you can twist her around your finger. And if, once in a while, anything should happen to you that you don't like, remember that you are at your father's brother's, and tell me about it alone. I will help you all I can, and you shall see that your real life is just beginning."

Amrei's eyes filled with tears at these words; and yet she could say nothing, for she felt estranged toward this man. His voice appealed to her, but when she looked at him, she felt as if she would have liked to run away.

Damie now came with the key. Amrei started to take it from him, but he would not give it up. With the peculiar pedantic conscientiousness of a child he declared that he had faithfully promised Coaly Mathew's wife to give it to nobody but his uncle. Accordingly the uncle took it from him, and it seemed to Amrei as if a magic secret door were being opened when the key for the first time rattled in the lock and turned — the hasp went down and the door opened! A strange chill, like that of a vault, came creeping from the

black front-room, which had also served as a kitchen. A little heap of ashes still lay on the hearth, and on the door the initials of Caspar Melchior Balthasar and the date of the parent's death, were written in chalk. Amrei read it aloud — her own father had written it.

"Look," cried Damie, "the eight is shaped just as you make it, and as the master won't have it — you know — from right to left."

Amrei motioned to him to keep quiet. She thought it terrible and sinful that Damie should talk so lightly — here, where she felt as if she were in church, or even in eternity — quite out of the world, and yet in the very midst of it. She herself opened the inside door; the room was dark as a grave, for the shutters were closed. A single sunbeam, shining through a crack in the wall, fell on the angel's head on the tile stove in such a way that the angel seemed to be laughing. Amrei crouched down in terror. When she looked up again, her uncle had opened one of the shutters, and the warm, outside air poured in. How cold it seemed in there! None of the furniture was left in the room but a bench nailed to the wall. There her mother used to spin, and there she had put Amrei's little hands together and taught her to knit.

"Come, children, let us go now," said the uncle. "It is not good to be here. Come with me to the baker and I will buy you each a white roll — or do you like biscuits better?"

"No, let us stay here a little longer," said Amrei; and she kept on stroking the place where her mother had sat. Then, pointing to a white spot on the wall, she said, half in a whisper: "There our cuckoo clock used to hang, and there our father's discharge from the army. And there the hanks of yarn that mother spun used to hang — she could spin even better than Black Marianne — Black Marianne has said so herself. She always got a skein more out of a pound than anybody else, and it was always so even — not a knot in it. And do you see that ring up there on the

ceiling? It was beautiful to see her twisting the threads there. If I had been old enough to know then, I would not have let them sell mother's spindle — it would have been a fine legacy for me. But there was nobody to take any interest in us. Oh, mother dear! Oh, father dear! If you knew how we have been pushed about, it would grieve you, even in eternity."

Amrei began to weep aloud, and Damie wept with her; even the uncle dried his eyes. He again urged them to come away from the place; he was vexed for having caused himself and the children this grief. But Amrei said in a decided way:

"Even if you do go, I shall not go with you."

"How do you mean? You will not go with me at all?"

Amrei started; for she suddenly realized what she had said, and it seemed to her almost as if it had been an inspiration. But presently she answered:

"No, I don't know about that yet. I merely meant to say, that I shall not willingly leave this house until I have seen everything again. Come, Damie, you are my brother — come up into the attic. Do you remember where we used to play hide-and-seek, behind the chimney? And then we'll look out of the window, where we dried the truffles. Don't you remember the bright florin father got for them?"

Something rustled and pattered across the ceiling. All three started, and the uncle said quickly:

"Stay where you are, Damie, and you too. What do you want up there? Don't you hear the mice running about?"

"Come with me — they won't eat us!" Amrei insisted. Damie, however, declared that he would not go, and Amrei, although she felt a secret fear, took courage and went upstairs alone. But she soon came down again, looking as pale as death, with nothing in her hand but a bundle of old straws.

"Damie says he'll go with me to America," said the uncle, as she came forward. Amrei, breaking up the straws in her hands, replied:

"I've nothing to say against it. I don't know yet what I shall do, but he can go if he likes."

"No," cried Damie, "I shan't do that. You did not go with Dame Landfried when she wanted to take you away, and so I shall not go off alone without you."

"Well, then, think it over—you are sensible enough," said the uncle, to conclude the matter. He then closed the shutters again, so that they stood in the dark, and hurried the children out of the room and through the vestibule, locked the outside door, and went to take the key back to Coaly Mathew. After that he started for the village with Damie alone. When he was some way off, he called back to Amrei:

"You have until tomorrow morning—then I shall go away whether you go with me or not."

Amrei was left alone. She looked after the retreating figures and wondered how one person could go away from another.

"There he goes," she thought, "and yet he belongs to you, and you to him."

Strange! As in a sleep-dream, a subject that has been lightly touched upon is renewed and interwoven with all sorts of strange details, so was it now with Amrei in her waking-dream. Damie had made but a passing allusion to the meeting with Farmer Landfried's wife. The remembrance of her had half faded away; but now it suddenly rose up fresh again—like a picture of past life in a vision. Amrei said to herself, almost aloud:

"Who knows if she may not thus suddenly think of you? One cannot tell why she should, and yet perhaps she is thinking of you at this very moment. For in this place she promised to be your protectress whenever you came to her,—it was yonder by the stunted willows. Why is it, that only the trees remain to be seen? Why is not a word like a tree, something which stands firmly, something which one can hold to. Yes, one can, if one will. Then one is as well off as a tree—and what an honorable farmer's wife

says, is firm and lasting. She, too, wept because she had to go away from her native place, although she had been married and away from it for a long time. And she has children of her own — one of them is called John."

Amrei was standing by the tree where they had picked the berries. She laid her hand upon the trunk and said:

"You — why don't you go away, too? Why don't people tell you to emigrate? Perhaps for you, too, it would be better elsewhere. But, to be sure, you are too large — you did not place yourself here, and who knows if you would not die in some other place. You can only be hewn down, not transplanted. Nonsense! I also had to leave my home. If it were my father, I should be obliged to go with him — he would not need to ask me. And he who asks too much, goes astray. No one can advise me in this matter, not even Marianne. And, after all, with my uncle, it's like this: 'I am doing you a good turn, and you must repay me.' If he's severe with me, and with Damie, because he's awkward, and we have to run away, where in this wide, strange world are we to go? Here everybody knows us, and every hedge, every tree has a familiar face. 'You know me, don't you?' she said, looking up at the tree. 'Oh, if you could but speak! God created you too — why cannot you speak? You knew my father and mother so well — why cannot you tell me what they would advise me to do?' Oh, dear father! Oh, dear mother! It grieves me so to have to go away! I have nothing here, and hardly anybody, and yet I feel as if I were being driven out of a warm bed into the cold snow. Is this deep sadness that I feel a sign that I ought not to go? Is it the true voice of conscience, or is it but a foolish fear? Oh, good Heaven, I do not know! If only a voice from Heaven would come now and tell me!"

The child trembled with inward terror, and the sense of life's difficulties for the first time arose vividly within her. And again she went on, half-thinking, half-talking to herself — but this time in a more decided way:

"If I were alone, I know for certain that I should not go;

I should stay here. For it would grieve me too much. Alone I could get along. Good — remember that; of one thing, then, you are sure — as to yourself you are decided. But what foolish thoughts are these! How can I imagine that I am alone, and without Damie? I am not alone — I belong to Damie, and he belongs to me. And for Damie it would be better if he had a fatherly hand to guide him — it would help him up. But why do you want anybody else, Amrei? — can you not take care of him yourself, if it be necessary? If he once starts out in that way, I can see that he'll be nothing but a servant all his life, a drudge for other people. And who knows how uncle's children will behave toward us? Because they're poor people themselves, they'll play the masters with us. No, no! I'm sure they're good,— and it would be a fine thing to be able to say: 'Good morning, cousin.' If uncle had only brought one of the children with him, I could decide much better — I could find out about things. Oh, good heavens, how difficult all this is!"

Amrei sat down by the tree. A chaffinch came hopping along, picked up a seed, looked around him, and flew away. Something crept across Amrei's face; she brushed it off — it was a ladybird. She let it creep about on her hand, between the mountains and valleys of her fingers, until it came to the tip of her little-finger and flew away.

"What a tale he'll have to tell about where he has been!" thought Amrei. "A little creature like that is well off indeed — wherever it flies, it is at home. How the larks are singing! They, too, are well off — they do not have to think what they ought to say and do. Yonder the butcher, with his dog, is driving a calf out of the village. The dog's voice is quite different from the lark's — but then a lark's singing would never drive a calf along."

"Where's the colt going?" Coaly Mathew called out of his window to a young lad who was leading a fine colt away by a halter.

"Farmer Rodel has sold it," was the reply; and presently the colt was heard neighing farther down the valley.

Amrei, who had heard this, again reflected:

"Yes, a creature like that can be sold away from its mother, and the mother hardly knows of it; and whoever pays for it, to him it belongs. But a person cannot be sold, and he who is unwilling cannot be led away by a halter. Yonder comes Farmer Rodel and his horses, with a large colt frisking beside them. You will be put in harness soon, colt, and perhaps you, too, will be sold. A man cannot be bought—he merely hires himself out. An animal for its work gets nothing more than its food and drink, while a person gets money as a reward. Yes, I can be a maid now, and with my wages I can apprentice Damie—he wants to be a mason. But when we are at uncle's, Damie won't be as much mine as he is now. Hark! the starling is flying home to the house which father made for him—he's singing merrily again. Father made the house for him out of old planks. I remember his saying that a starling won't go into a house if it's made of new wood, and I feel just the same. 'You, tree,—now I know—if you rustle as long as I stay here, I shall remain.'" And Amrei listened intently; soon it seemed to her as if the tree were rustling, but again when she looked up at the branches they were quite still, and she did not know what it was she heard.

Something was now coming along the road with a great cackling and with a cloud of dust flying before it. It was a flock of geese returning from the pasture on the Holderwasen. Amrei abstractedly imitated their cackling for a long time. Then her eyes closed and she fell asleep.

An entire spring-array of blossoms had burst forth in this young soul. The budding trees in the valley, as they drank in the evening dew, shed forth their fragrance over the child who had fallen asleep on her native soil, from which she could not tear herself.

It had long been dark when she awoke, and a voice was crying:

"Amrei, where are you?"

She sat up, but did not answer. She looked wonderingly

at the stars,—it seemed to her as if the voice had come from Heaven. Not until the call was repeated did she recognize the voice of Black Marianne, and then she answered:

"Here I am!"

Black Marianne now came up and said:

"Oh, it's good that I have found you! They are like mad all through the village; one says he saw you in the wood, another that he met you in the fields, that you were running along, crying, and would listen to no call. I began to fear that you had jumped into the pond. You need not be afraid, dear child, you need not run away; nobody can compel you to go with your uncle."

"And who said that I did not want to go?" But suddenly a gust of wind rustled loudly through the branches of the tree. "But I shall certainly not go!" Amrei cried, holding fast to the tree with her hand.

"Come home—there's a severe storm coming up, and the wind will blow it here directly," urged Marianne.

And so Amrei walked, almost staggered, back to the village with Black Marianne. What did it mean—that people had seen her running through field and forest? Or was it only Black Marianne's fancy?

The night was pitch dark, but now and then bright flashes of lightning illuminated the houses, revealing them in a dazzling glare, which blinded their eyes and compelled them to stand still. And when the lightning disappeared, nothing more could be seen. In their own native village the two seemed as if they were lost, as if they were in a strange place, and they hastened onward with an uncertain step. The dust whirled up in eddies, so that at times they could scarcely make any progress; then, wet with perspiration, they struggled on again, until at last they reached the shelter of their home, just as the first heavy drops of rain began to fall. A gust of wind blew open the door, and Amrei cried:

"Open, door!"

She was very likely thinking of a fairy tale, in which a magic door opens at a mysterious word.

Chapter V

on the holderwasen

Accordingly, when her uncle came the next morning, Amrei declared that she would remain where she was. There was a strange mixture of bitterness and benevolence in her uncle's reply:

"Yes, you certainly take after your mother — she would never have anything to do with us. But I couldn't take Damie alone along with me, even if he wanted to go; for a long time he wouldn't be able to do anything but eat bread, whereas you would have been able to earn it too."

Amrei replied that she preferred to do that here at home for the present, but that if her uncle remained in the same mind, she and her brother would come to him at some future time. Indeed, the interest her uncle now expressed for the children, for a moment, almost made her waver in her resolution, but in her characteristic way she did not venture to show any signs of it. She merely said:

"Give my love to your children, and tell them I feel very sorry about never having seen my nearest relatives; and especially now that they are going across the seas, since perhaps I shall never see them in my life."

Then her uncle stood up quickly, and commissioned Amrei to give his love to Damie, for he himself had no time to wait to bid him farewell. And with that he went away.

When Damie came soon afterward and heard of his uncle's departure, he wanted to run after him, and even Amrei felt a similar impulse. But she restrained herself and did not yield to it. She spoke and acted as if she were obeying some one's command in every word she said and in every movement she made; and yet her thoughts were wandering along the road by which her uncle had gone. She walked through the village, leading her brother by the hand, and nodded to all the people she met. She felt just as if she had been away and was now returning to them all.

Her uncle had wanted to tear her away, and she thought that everybody else must be as glad that she had not gone, as she was herself. But she soon found out that they would not only have been glad to let her go, but that they were positively angry with her because she had not gone. Crappy Zachy opened his eyes wide at her and said:

"Child, you have an obstinate head of your own — the whole village is angry with you for spurning your good fortune. Still, who knows whether it would have been good fortune? But they call it so now, at any rate, and everybody that looks at you casts it up to you how much you receive from the parish. So make haste and get yourself off the public charity lists."

"But what am I to do?"

"Farmer Rodel's wife would like to have you in her service, but the old man won't listen to it."

Amrei very likely felt that henceforward she would have to be doubly brave, in order to escape the reproaches of her own conscience, as well as those of others; and so she asked again:

"Don't you know of anything at all?"

"Yes, certainly; but you must not be ashamed of anything — except begging. Have you not heard that foolish Fridolin yesterday killed two geese belonging to a farmer's wife? The goosekeeper's place is vacant, and I advise you to take it."

It was soon done. That very noon Amrei drove the geese out to the Holderwasen, as the pasture on the little hill by the King's Well was called. Damie loyally helped his sister in doing it.

Black Marianne, however, was very much put out about this new service, and declared, not without reason:

"It's something that's remembered against a person an entire lifetime to have had such a place. People never forget it, and always refer to it; and later on every one will think twice about taking you into their service, because they will say: 'Why, that's the goose-girl!' And if any

one does take you, out of compassion, you'll get low wages and bad treatment, and they'll always say: 'Oh, that's good enough for a goose-girl.'"

"I won't mind that," replied Amrei; "and you have told me hundreds of times about how a goose-girl became a queen."

"That was in olden times. But who knows? — you belong to the old world. Sometimes it seems to me that you are not a child at all, and who knows, you old-fashioned soul, if a wonder won't happen in your case?"

This hint that she had not yet stood upon the lowest round of the ladder of honer, but that there was a possibility of her descending even lower that she was, startled Amrei. For herself she thought nothing of it, but from that time forth she would not allow Damie to keep the geese with her. He was a man — or was to be one — and it might do him harm if it were said of him, later on, that he had kept geese. But, to save her soul, she could not make this clear to him, and he refused to listen to her. For it is always thus; at the point where mutual understanding ends, vexation begins; the inward helplessness translates itself into a feeling of outward injustice and injury.

Amrei, nevertheless, was almost glad that Damie could remain angry with her for so many days; for it showed that he was learning how to stand up against the world and to assert his own will.

Damie, however, soon got a place for himself. He was employed by his guardian, Farmer Rodel, in the capacity of scarecrow, an occupation which required him to swing a rattle in the farmer's orchard all day long, for the purpose of frightening the sparrows away from the early cherries and vegetable-beds. At first this duty appealed to him as sport, but he soon grew tired of it and gave it up.

It was a pleasant, but at the same time a laborious office that Amrei had undertaken. And it often seemed especially hard to her that she could do nothing to attach the creatures to her; indeed, they were hardly to be distinguished from

one another. And it was not at all an idle remark that Black Marianne made to her one day when she returned from Mossbrook Wood:

"Animals that live in flocks and herds," she said, "if you take each one separately, are always stupid."

"I think so, too," replied Amrei. "These geese are stupid because they know how to do too many different things. They can swim, and run, and fly, but they are not really at home either in the water, or on land, or in the air. That's what makes them stupid."

"I still maintain," replied Marianne, "that there's the making of an old hermit in you."

The Holderwasen was not one of those lonely, sequestered spots which the world of fiction seems to select for its gleaming, glittering legends. Through the centre of the Holderwasen ran a road to Endringen, and not far from it stood the many-colored boundary-stakes with the coats-of-arms of the two sovereign princes whose dominions came together here. In rustic vehicles of all kinds the peasants used to drive past, and men, women, and children kept passing to and fro with hoe, scythe, and sickle. The *gardes-champêtres* of the two dominions also used to pass by often, the barrels of their muskets shining as they approached and gleaming long after they had passed. Amrei was almost always accosted by the *garde-champêtre* of Endringen as she sat by the roadside, and he often made inquiries of her as to whether this or that person had passed by. But she was never able to give the desired information — or perhaps she kept it from him on purpose, on account of the instinctive aversion the people, and especially the children, of a village have for these men, whom they invariably look upon as the armed enemies of the human race, going to and fro in search of some one to devour.

Theisles Manz, who used to sit by the road breaking stones, hardly spoke a word to Amrei; he would go sulkily from stone-heap to stone-heap, and his knocking was more incessant than the tapping of the woodpecker in Mossbrook

Wood, and more regular than the piping and chirping of the grasshoppers in the neighboring meadows and clover-fields.

[And so Amrei spent day after day at Holderwasen, watching the geese and the passers-by, studying the birds and the flowers and the trees, dreaming of her father and mother, and wondering what was in store for Damie and herself. There was a trough of clear, fresh water by the roadside, and Amrei used to bring a jug with her in order to offer it to thirsty people who had nothing to drink out of.]

One day a little Bernese wagon, drawn by two handsome white horses, came rattling along the road; a stout, upland farmer took up almost the entire seat, which was meant for two. He drew up by the roadside and asked:

"Girlie, have you anything one can drink out of?"

"Yes, certainly—I'll get it for you." And she went off briskly to fetch her pitcher, which she filled with water.

"Ah!" said the farmer, stopping to take breath after a long draught; and with the water running down his chin, he continued, talking half into the jug: "There's after all no water like this in all the world." And again he raised the jug to his lips, and motioned to Amrei to keep still while he took a second long, thirsty draught. For it is extremely disagreeable to be addressed when you are drinking; you swallow hurriedly and feel an oppression afterward.

The child seemed to realize this, for not until the farmer had handed back the jug did she say:

"Yes, this is good, wholesome water; and if you would like to water your horses, it is especially good for them—it won't give them cramps."

"My horses are warm and must not drink now. Do you come from Haldenbrunn, my girl?"

"Yes indeed."

"And what is your name?"

"Amrei."

"And to whom do you belong?"

BENJAMIN VAUTIER

AMREI BRISKLY BROUGHT HER PITCHER FILLED WITH WATER

"To nobody now—my father was Josenhans."

"What! Josenhans, who served at Farmer Rodel's?"

"Yes."

"I knew him well. It was too bad that he died so soon. Wait, child—I'll give you something." He drew a large leather bag out of his pocket, groped about in it for a long time, and said at last: There, take this."

"No, thank you—I don't accept presents—I'll take nothing."

"Take it—you can accept it from me all right. Is Farmer Rodel your guardian?"

"Yes."

"He might have done something better than make a goose-girl of you. Well, God keep you."

Away rolled the wagon, and Amrei found herself alone with a coin in her hand.

"'You can accept it from me all right.'—Who was he that he could say that? And why didn't he make himself known? Why, it's a groschen, and there's a bird on it. Well, it won't make him poor, nor me rich."

The rest of that day Amrei did not offer her pitcher to any one else; she was afraid of having something given to her again. When she got home in the evening, Black Marianne told her that Farmer Rodel had sent for her, and that she was to go over to him directly.

Amrei hastened to his house, and as she entered, Farmer Rodel called out to her:

"What have you been saying to Farmer Landfried?"

"I don't know any Farmer Landfried."

"He was with you at the Holderwasen today, and gave you something."

"I did not know who he was—and here's his money still."

"I've nothing to do with that. Now, say frankly and honestly, you tiresome child, did I persuade you to be a goose-keeper? If you don't give it up this very day, I'm no guardian of yours. I won't have such things said of me!"

"I'll let everybody know that it was not your fault — but give it up is something I can't do. I must stick to it, at any rate for the rest of the summer — I must finish what I have begun."

"You're a crabbed creature," said the farmer; and he walked out of the room. But his wife, who was lying ill in bed, called out:

"You're quite right — stay just as you are. I prophesy that it will go well with you. A hundred years from now they will be saying in this village of one who has done well: 'He has the fortune of Brosi's Severin and of Josenhans' Amrei.' Your dry bread will fall into the honey-pot yet."

Farmer Rodel's sick wife was looked upon as crazy; and, as if frightened by a specter, Amrei hurried away without a word of reply.

Amrei told Black Marianne that a wonder had happened to her; Farmer Landfried, whose wife she so often thought about, had spoken to her and had taken her part in a talk with Farmer Rodel, and had given her something. She then displayed the piece of money, and Marianne called out, laughing:

"Yes, I might have guessed myself that it was Farmer Landfried. That's just like him — to give a poor child a bad groschen!"

"Why is it bad?" asked Amrei; and the tears came into her eyes.

"Why, that's a bird groschen — they're not worth full value — they're worth only a kreutzer and a half."

"Then he intended to give me only a kreutzer and a half," said Amrei decidedly.

And here for the first time an inward contrast showed itself between Amrei and Black Marianne. The latter almost rejoiced at every bad thing she heard about people, whereas Amrei put a good construction on everything. She was always happy, and no matter how frequently in her solitude she burst into tears, she never expected anything, and hence everything that she received was a surprise to her, and she was all the more thankful for it.

[Amrei hoped that her meeting with Farmer Landfried would result in his coming to take her to live with him, but she hoped in vain, for she watched the geese all summer long, and did not see or hear of him again.]

Chapter VI

THE WOMAN WHO BAKED HER OWN BREAD

A woman who leads a solitary, isolated life and bakes bread for herself quite alone, is called an " Eigenbrötlerin " (a woman who bakes her own bread), and such a woman, as a rule, has all kinds of peculiarities. No one had more right or more inclination to be an " Eigenbrötlerin " than did Black Marianne, although she never had anything to bake; for oatmeal and potatoes and potatoes and oatmeal were the only things she ever ate. She always lived by herself, and did not like to associate with other people. Only along toward autumn did she become restless and impatient; about that time of the year she would talk to herself a great deal, and would often accost people of her own accord, especially strangers who happened to be passing through the village. For she was anxious to find out whether the masons from this or that place had yet returned home for the winter, and whether they had brought news of her John. While she was once more boiling and washing the linen she had been bleaching all summer long, for which purpose she remained up all night, she would always be muttering to herself. No one could understand exactly what she said, but the burden of it was intelligible, for it was always: " That is for me, and that is for thee." She was in the habit of saying twelve Paternosters daily for her John, but on this particular washing-night they became innumerable. When the first snow fell she was always especially cheerful; for then there could be no more outdoor work, and then he would be most likely to come home. At these times she would often talk to a white hen which she kept in a coop, telling it that it would have to be killed when John came. She had repeated these proceedings for

many years, and people never ceased telling her that she was foolish to be thus continually thinking of the return of her John.

This autumn it would be eighteen years since John had gone away, and every year John Michael Winkler was reported in the paper as missing, which would be done until his fiftieth year—he was now in his thirty-sixth. The story circulated in the village that John had gone among the gipsies. Once, indeed, his mother had mistaken a young gipsy for him; he was a man who bore a striking resemblance to her missing son, in that he was small of stature and had the same dark complexion; and he had seemed rather pleased at being taken for John. But the mother had put him to the proof, for she still had John's hymn-book and his confirmation verse; and, inasmuch as the stranger did not know this verse and could not tell who were his sponsors, or what had happened to him on the day when Brosi's Severin arrived with his English wife, and later on when the new well was dug at the town-hall—inasmuch as he did not satisfy these and other proofs, he could not be the right man. And yet Marianne used to give the gipsy a lodging whenever he came to the village, and the children in the streets used to cry "John!" after him.

John was advertised as being liable to military duty and as a deserter; and although his mother declared that he would have slipped through under the measuring-stick as "too short," she knew that he would not escape punishment if he returned, and inferred that this was the reason why he did not return. And it was very strange to hear her praying, almost in the same breath, for the welfare of her son and the death of the reigning prince; for she had been told that when the sovereign died, his successor would proclaim a general amnesty for all past offenses.

Every year Marianne used to ask the schoolmaster to give her the page in the newspaper in which her John was advertised for, and she always put it with his hymn-book. But this year it was a good thing that Marianne could not read, so that the schoolmaster could send her another page

in place of the one she wanted. For a strange rumor was going through the whole village; whenever two people stood together talking, they would be saying:

"Black Marianne must not be told anything about it. It would kill her — it would drive her crazy."

For a report, coming from the Ambassador in Paris, had passed through a number of higher and lower officers, until it reached the Village Council; it stated that, according to a communication received from Algiers, John Winkler of Haldenbrunn had perished in that colony during an outpost skirmish. There was much talk in the village of the singular fact that so many in high departments should have concerned themselves so much about the dead John. But this stream of well-confirmed information was arrested before it had reached the end of its course.

At a meeting of the Village Council it was determined that nothing at all should be said to Black Marianne about it. It would be wrong, they said, to embitter the last few years of her life by taking her one comfort away from her.

But instead of keeping the report secret, the first thing the members of the Council did was to talk of it in their homes, and it was not long before the whole village knew about it, excepting only Black Marianne. Every one, afraid of betraying the secret to her, looked at her with strange glances; no one addressed her, and even her greetings were scarcely returned. It was only Marianne's peculiar disposition that prevented her from noticing this. And indeed, if any one did speak to her and was drawn on to say anything about John's death, it was done in the conjectural and soothing way to which she had been accustomed for years; and Marianne did not believe it now any more than she had formerly, because nobody ever said anything definite about the report of his decease.

It would have been better if Amrei had known nothing about it, but there was a strange, seductive charm in getting as close as possible to a subject that was forbidden. Accordingly every one spoke to Amrei of the mournful event, warned her not to tell Black Marianne anything

about it, and asked if the mother had no presentiments or dreams of her son's death — if his spirit did not haunt the house. After she heard of it Amrei was always trembling and quaking in secret; for she alone was always near Black Marianne, and it was terrible to know something which she was obliged to conceal from her. Even the people in whose house Black Marianne had rented a small room could no longer bear to have her near them, and they showed their sympathy by giving her notice to quit.

But how strangely things are associated in this life! As a result of this very thing Amrei experienced joy as well as grief — for it opened up her parents' home to her again. Black Marianne went to live there, and Amrei, who at first trembled as she went back and forth in the house, carrying water or making a fire, always thinking that now her father and mother must come, afterward began gradually to feel quite at home in it. She sat spinning day and night, until she had earned enough money to buy back her parents' cuckoo-clock from Coaly Mathew. Now she had at least one household article of her own! But the cuckoo had fared badly among strangers; it had lost half of its voice, and the other half seemed to stick in its throat — it could only cry "cook" — and as often as it did that, Amrei would involuntarily add the missing "oo."

Black Marianne could not bear to hear the clock cuckoo and fixed the pendulum so that it would not work, saying that she always had the time in her head. And it was indeed wonderful how true this was — at any minute she could tell what time it was, although it was of very little consequence to her. In fact, this waiting, expectant woman possessed a remarkable degree of alertness, for as she was always listening to hear her son coming, she was naturally wide-awake all the time. And, although she never visited anybody in the village, and spoke to nobody, she knew everybody, and all about the most secret things that went on in the place. She could infer a great deal from the manner in which people met one another, and from words she

overheard here and there. And because this seemed very wonderful, she was feared and avoided. She often used to describe herself, according to a local expression, as an "old-experienced" woman, and yet she was exceedingly active. Every day, year in and year out, she ate a few juniper berries, and people said that was the reason why she was so vigorous and showed her sixty-six years so little. The fact that the two sixes stood together caused her, according to an old country saying* (which, however, was not universally believed in) to be regarded as a witch. It was said that she sometimes milked her black goat for hours at a time, and that this goat gave an astonishing quantity of milk, but that in milking this goat she was in reality drawing the milk out of the udders of the cows belonging to persons she hated, and that she had an especial grudge against Farmer Rodel's cattle. Moreover, Marianne's successful poultry-keeping was also looked upon as witchcraft; for where did she get the food, and how was it that she always had chickens and eggs to sell? It is true that in the summer she was often seen collecting cockchafers, grasshoppers, and all kinds of worms, and on moonless nights she was seen gliding like a wil-o'-the-wisp among the graves in the churchyard, where she would be carrying a burning torch and collecting the large black worms that crept out, all the time muttering to herself. It was even said that in the quiet winter nights she held wonderful conversations with her goat and with her fowls, which she housed in her room during the winter. The entire wild army of tales of witchcraft and sorcery, banished by school education, came back and attached itself to Black Marianne.

Amrei sometimes felt afraid in the long, silent winter nights, when she sat spinning by Black Marianne, and nothing was heard but an occasional sleepy clucking from the fowls, or a dreamy bleat from the goat. And it seemed truly magical how fast Marianne spun! She even said once:

* This old country saying is founded on the similarity in sound between *sechse* (sixes) and *hexe* (witch).

"I think my John is helping me to spin." And then again she complained that this winter, for the first time, she had not thought wholly and solely of her John. She took her self to task for it and called herself a bad mother, and complained that it seemed all the time as if the features of her John were slowly vanishing before her — as if she were forgetting what he had done at such and such a time, how he had laughed, sung, and wept, and how he had climbed the tree and jumped into the ditch.

But however cheerfully and brightly Marianne might begin to speak, she always ended by relapsing into gloomy complaint and mourning; and she who professed to like to be alone and to think of nothing and to love nothing, only lived to think about her son and to love him. Consequently Amrei made up her mind to release herself from this uncanny position of being alone with Black Marianne; she demanded that Damie should be taken into the house. At first Marianne opposed it vehemently, but when Amrei threatened to leave the house herself, and then coaxed her in such a childlike way and tried so hard to do whatever would best please her, the old woman at last consented.

Damie, who had learned from Crappy Zachy to knit wool, now sat beneath the parental roof again; and at night, when the brother and sister were asleep in the garret, each one of them would wake the other when they heard Black Marianne down stairs, running to and fro and muttering to herself. But Damie's transmigration to Black Marianne's was the cause of new trouble. Damie was exceedingly discontented at having been compelled to learn a miserable trade that was fit only for a cripple. He wanted to be a mason, and although Amrei was very much opposed to it, for she predicted that he would not keep at it, Black Marianne supported him in it. She would have liked to make all the young lads masons, and then to have sent them out on their travels that they might bring back news of her John.

Black Marianne seldom went to church, but she always liked to have anybody else borrow her hymn-book and take it to church—it seemed to give her a kind of pleasure to have it there. She was especially pleased when any strange workman, who happened to be employed in the village, borrowed the hymn-book which John had left behind him for that purpose; for it seemed to her as if John himself were praying in his native church, when the words were spoken and sung out of his book. And now Damie was obliged to go to church twice every Sunday with John's hymn-book.

While Marianne did not go to church herself, she was always to be seen at every solemn ceremony in the village or in any of the surrounding villages. There was never a funeral which Marianne did not attend as one of the mourners; and at the funeral sermon, and the blessing spoken over the grave, even of a little child, she always wept so violently that one would have thought she was the nearest relative. On the way home, however, she was always especially cheerful, for this weeping seemed to be a kind of relief to her; all the year round she had to suppress so much secret sorrow, that she felt thankful for an opportunity to give vent to her feelings.

Could people be blamed if they shunned her as an uncanny person, especially as they were keeping a secret from her? The habit of avoiding Black Marianne was partly extended to Amrei herself; in several houses where the girl called to offer help or sympathy she was made to see distinctly that her presence was not desired, especially as she herself was beginning to show certain eccentricities which astonished the whole village; for example, except on the coldest winter days she used to go barefoot, and people said that she must know some secret method to prevent herself from catching cold and dying.

Only in the house of Farmer Rodel were they glad to have her, for the farmer was her guardian. His wife, who had always taken Amrei's part and who had one day promised to take her into her service when she was older,

was prevented from carrying out this plan. She herself was taken by another — Death. The heaviness of life is generally felt in later years, when one friend after another has been called away, and only a name and a memory remains. But it was Amrei's lot to experience this in her youth; and it was she and Black Marianne who wept more bitterly than any of the others at the funeral of Farmer Rodel's wife.

Farmer Rodel was always complaining about how hard it was that he should have to give up his property so soon, although not one of his three children was yet married. But hardly a year had passed, and Damie had not yet worked a full year in the quarry, when the celebration of a double wedding was announced in the village; for Farmer Rodel's eldest daughter and his only son were to be married on the same day. On this day Farmer Rodel was to give over his property to his son, and at this wedding it was fated that Amrei should acquire a new name and be introduced into a new life.

In the space before the large dancing-floor the children were assembled, and while the grown-up people were dancing and enjoying themselves within, the children were imitating them outside. But, strange to say, no boy and no girl would dance with Amrei. No one knew who said it first, but a voice was heard to call out:

"No one will dance with you — you're Little Barefoot!" and "Barefoot! Barefoot! Barefoot!" was echoed on all sides. Amrei was ready to weep; but here again she quickly made use of the power which enabled her to ignore insult and injury. Suppressing her tears, she seized her apron by the two ends and danced around by herself so gracefully and prettily, that all the children stopped to look at her. And presently the grown-up people were nodding to one another, and a circle of men and women was formed around Amrei. Farmer Rodel, in particular, who on this day was eating and drinking with double relish, snapped his fingers and whistled the waltz the musicians were playing, while

Amrei went on dancing and seemed to know no weariness. When at last the music ceased, Farmer Rodel took Amrei by the hand and said:

"You clever girl, who taught you to do that so well?"

"Nobody."

"Why don't you dance with any one?"

"It is better to dance alone — then one does not have to wait for anybody, and has one's partner always at hand."

"Have you had anything from the wedding yet?" asked Farmer Rodel, with a complacent smile.

"No."

"Then come in and eat," said the proud farmer; and he led the poor girl into the house and sat her down at the wedding table, at which feasting was going on all day long. Amrei did not eat much. Farmer Rodel, for a jest, wanted to make the child tipsy, but Amrei said bravely:

"If I drink more, I shall have to be led and shall not be able to walk alone; and Marianne says 'alone' is the best conveyance, for then the horses are always harnessed."

All were astonished at the child's wisdom.

Young Farmer Rodel came in with his wife and asked the child, to tease her:

"Have you brought us a wedding present? For if one eats so, one ought to bring a wedding present."

The father-in-law, moved by an incomprehensible impulse of generosity, secretly slipped a sixpenny piece into the child's hand. Amrei held the coin fast in her palm, nodded to the old man, and said to the young couple:

"I have the promise and an earnest of payment; your deceased mother always promised me that I should serve her, and that no one else should be nurse to her first grandchild."

"Yes, my wife always wished it," said the old farmer approvingly. And what he had refused to do for his wife while she was alive, for fear of having to provide for an orphan, he now did, now that he could no longer please her

with it, in order to make it appear before the people that he was doing it out of respect for her memory. But even now he did it not from kindness, but in the correct calculation that the orphan would be serviceable to him, the deposed farmer who was her guardian; and the burden of her maintenance, which would amount to more than her wages, would fall on others and not on him.

The young couple looked at each other, and the man said:

"Bring your bundle to our house tomorrow—you can live with us."

"Very well," said Amrei, "tomorrow I will bring my bundle. But now I should like to take my bundle with me; give me a bottle of wine, and this meat I will wrap up and take to Marianne and my Damie."

They let Amrei have her way; but old Farmer Rodel said to her secretly:

"Give me back my sixpence—I thought you were going to give it up."

"I'll keep that as an earnest from you," answered Amrei slyly; "you shall see, I will give you value for it."

Farmer Rodel laughed to himself half angrily, and Amrei went back to Black Marianne with money, wine, and meat.

The house was locked; and there was a great contrast between the loud music and noise and feasting at the wedding house, and the silence and solitude here. Amrei knew where to wait for Marianne on her way home, for the old woman very often went to the stone-quarry and sat there behind a hedge for a long time, listening to the tapping of chisels and mallets. It seemed to her like a melody, carrying her back to the times when her John used to work there too; and so she often sat there, listening and watching.

Sure enough, Amrei found Black Marianne there, and half an hour before quitting time she called Damie up out of the quarry. And here among the rocks a wedding feast was held, more merry than the one amid the noise and music. Damie was especially joyful, and Marianne, too,

was unusually cheerful. But she would not drink a drop of the wine, for she had declared that no wine should moisten her lips until she drank it at her John's wedding. When Amrei told with glee how she had got a place at young Farmer Rodel's, and was going there tomorrow, Black Marianne started up in furious anger; picking up a stone and pressing it to her bosom, she said:

"It would be better a thousand times that I had this in me, a stone like this, than a living heart! Why cannot I be alone? Why did I ever allow myself to like anybody again? But now it's all over forever! You false, faithless child! Hardly are you able to raise your wings, than off you fly! But it is well. I am alone, and my John shall be alone, too, when he comes — and what I have wished would come to pass, shall never be!"

With that she ran off toward the village.

"She's a witch, after all," said Damie when she had disappeared. "I won't drink the wine — who knows if she has not bewitched it?"

"You can drink it — she's only a strict Eigenbrötlerin and she has a heavy cross to bear. I know how to win her back again," said Amrei, consolingly.

Chapter VII

THE SISTER OF MERCY

During the next year there was plenty of life in Farmer Rodel's house. "Barefoot," for so Amrei was now called, was handy in every way, and knew how to make herself liked by everybody; she could tell the young farmer's wife, who had come to the place as a stranger, what the customs of the village were; she studied the habits and characters of those around her and learned to adapt herself to them. She managed to do all sorts of kindnesses to old Farmer Rodel, who could not get over his chagrin at having had to retire so early, and grumbled all day long about it. She told what a good girl his daughter-in-law was, only that

she did not know how to show it. And when, after scarcely a year, the first child came, Amrei evinced so much joy at the event, and was so handy at everything that had to be done, that all in the house were full of her praise; but according to the fashion of such people they were more ready to scold her for any trifling omission than to praise her openly. But Amrei did not expect any praise. She knew so well how to carry the little baby to its grandfather, and just when to take it away again, that it pleased and surprised everybody. And when the baby's first tooth came, and Amrei exhibited it to the grandfather, the old man said:

"I will give you a sixpence for the pleasure you have given me. But do you remember the one you stole from me at the wedding—now you may keep it honestly."

Meanwhile Black Marianne was not forgotten. It was certainly a difficult task to regain her favor. At first Marianne would have nothing to say to Barefoot, whose new mistress would not allow her to go to Marianne's, especially not with the child, as it was always feared that the witch might do the baby some mischief. Great patience and perseverance were required to overcome this prejudice, but it was accomplished at last. Indeed, Little Barefoot brought matters to such a pass that Farmer Rodel himself several times paid a visit to Black Marianne, a thing which astonished the entire village. These visits, however, were soon discontinued, for Marianne once said:

"I am nearly seventy years old and have got on until now without the friendship of a farmer; and it's not worth while to make a change now."

Naturally enough Damie was often with his sister. But young Farmer Rodel objected to this, alleging, not without reason, that it would result in his having to feed the big boy; for in a large house like his one could not see whether a servant was not giving him all kinds of things to eat. He therefore forbade Damie to come to the house, except on Sunday afternoons.

Damie, however, had already seen too much of the comfort of living in a wealthy farmer's house; his mouth watered for the flesh-pots, and he wanted to stay there, if only as a servant. Stone-chipping was such a hungry life. But Barefoot had many objections to make. She told him to remember that he was already learning a second trade, and that he ought to keep at it; that it was a mistake to be always wanting to begin something new, and then to suppose that one could be happy in that way. She said that one must be happy in the place where one was, if one was ever to be happy at all. Damie allowed himself to be persuaded for a time. And so great was the acknowledged authority of Little Barefoot already, and so natural did it seem that she should dictate to her brother, that he was always called "Barefoot's Damie," as if he were not her brother, but her son. And yet he was a head taller than she, and did not act as if he were subordinate to her. Indeed, he often expressed his annoyance that he was not considered as good as she, merely because he did not have a tongue like hers in his head. His discontent with himself and with his trade he always vented first on his sister. She bore it patiently, and because he showed before the world that she was obliged to give him his way, she really gained more influence and power through this very publicity. For everybody said that it was very good of Amrei to do what she did for her brother, and she rose in the public estimation by letting him treat her thus unkindly, while she in turn cared for him like a mother. She washed and darned for him at night so steadily, that he was one of the neatest boys in the village; and instead of taking two stout pairs of shoes, which she received as part of her wages every half year, she always paid the shoemaker a little extra money to make two pairs for Damie, while she herself went barefoot; it was only on Sunday, when she went to church, that she was seen wearing shoes at all.

Little Barefoot was exceedingly annoyed to find that Damie, though no one knew why, had become the general

butt of all the joking and teasing in the village. She took him sharply to task for it, and told him he ought not to tolerate it; but he retorted that she ought to speak to the people about it, and not to him, for he could not stand up against it. But that was not to be done — in fact, Damie was secretly not particularly annoyed by being teased everywhere he went. Sometimes, indeed, it hurt him to have everybody laugh at him, and to have boys much younger than himself take liberties with him, but it annoyed him a great deal more to have people take no notice of him at all, and he would then try to make a fool of himself and expose himself to insult.

Barefoot, on the other hand, was certainly in some danger of developing into the hermit Marianne had always professed to recognize in her. She had once attached herself to one single companion, the daughter of Coaly Mathew; but this girl had been away for years, working in a factory in Alsace, and nothing was ever heard of her now. Barefoot lived so entirely by herself that she was not reckoned at all among the young people of the village; she was friendly and sociable with those of her own age, but her only real playmate was Black Marianne. And just because Barefoot lived so much by herself, she had no influence upon the behavior of Damie, who, however much he might be teased and tormented, always had to have the company of others, and could never be alone like his sister.

But now Damie suddenly emancipated himself; one fine Sunday he exhibited to his sister some money he had received as an earnest from Scheckennarre, of Hirlingen, to whom he had hired himself out as a farmhand.

"If you had spoken to me about it first," said Barefoot, "I could have told you of a better place. I would have given you a letter to Farmer Landfried's wife in Allgau; and there you would have been treated like a son of the family."

"Oh, don't talk to me about her!" said Damie crossly. "She has owed me a pair of leather breeches she promised

me for nearly thirteen years. Don't you remember? — when we were little, and thought we had only to knock, and mother and father would open the door. Don't talk to me of Dame Landfried! Who knows whether she ever thinks of us, or indeed if she is still alive?"

"Yes, she's alive — she's related to the family which I serve, and they often speak of her. And all her children are married, except one son, who is to have the farm."

"Now you want to make me feel dissatisfied with my new place," said Damie complainingly, "and you go and tell me that I might have had a better one. Is that right?" And his voice faltered.

"Oh, don't be so soft-hearted all the time!" said Barefoot. "Is what I said going to take away any of your good fortune? You are always acting as if the geese were biting you. And now I will only tell you one thing, and that is, that you should hold fast to what you have, and remain where you are. It's no use to be like a cuckoo, sleeping on a different tree every night. I, too, could get other places, but I won't; I have brought it about that I am well off here. Look you, he who is every minute running to another place will always be treated like a stranger — people know that tomorrow he perhaps won't belong to the house, and so they don't make him at home in it today."

"I don't need your preaching," said Damie, and he started to go away in anger. "You are always scolding me, and toward everybody else in the world you are good-natured."

"That's because you are my brother," said Barefoot, laughing and caressing the angry boy.

In truth, a strange difference had developed itself between brother and sister; Damie had a certain begging propensity, and then again the next minute showed a kind of pride; Barefoot, on the other hand, was always good-natured and yielding, but was nevertheless supported by a certain self-respect, which was never detracted from by her willingness to work and oblige.

She now succeeded in pacifying her brother, and said:

"Look, I have an idea. But first you must be good, for the coat must not lie on an angry heart. Farmer Rodel still has in his possession our dear father's clothes; you are tall now, and they will just fit you. Now it will give you a good appearance if you arrive at the farm in such respectable clothes; then your fellow-servants will see where you come from, and what worthy parents you had."

Damie saw that this was sensible, and Barefoot induced old Farmer Rodel — with considerable difficulty, for he did not want to give up the clothes so soon — to hand the garments over to Damie. Barefoot at once took him up to her room and made him put on his father's coat and vest then and there. He objected, but when Amrei had set her heart on a thing, it had to be done. The hat, alone, Damie could not be induced to wear; when he had put on the coat, Amrei laid her hand on his shoulder and said:

"There, now you are my brother and my father, and now the coat is going to be worn again with a new man in it. Look, Damie,— you have there the finest coat of honor in the world; hold it in honor, and be as worthy and honest in it as our dear father was."

She could say no more. She laid her head on her brother's shoulder, and tears fell upon the paternal coat which had once more been brought to light.

"You say that I am soft-hearted," said Damie, "and you are much worse yourself."

And Barefoot was indeed deeply and quickly moved by anything; but she was strong and light-hearted like a child. It was true of her, what Marianne had observed when she went to sleep for the first time in the old woman's house; she was waking and sleeping, laughing and weeping, almost all at the same time. Every occurrence and every emotion affected her very strongly, but she soon got over it and recovered her balance.

She continued to weep.

"You make one's heart so heavy," said Damie complain-

TEARS FELL UPON THE PATERNAL COAT

BENJAMIN VAUTIER

ingly. "It's hard enough to have to go away from one's home and live among strangers. You ought rather to cheer me up, than to be so — so —."

"Right thinking is the best cheer," replied Amrei. "It does not weigh upon the heart at all. But you are right — you have enough to bear; a single pound added to the load might crush you. I am foolish after all. But come — let us see now what the sun has to say, when father walks out in its light once more. No, I didn't mean to say that. Come, you yourself surely know where we must go, and what you must take leave of; for even if you are going only a couple of miles away, still you are going away from the village, and you must bid it good-by. It's hard enough for me that I am not to have you with me any longer — no, I mean that I am not to be with you any longer, for I don't want to rule over you, as people say I do. Yes, yes,— old Marianne was right; *alone* is a great word; one can't possibly learn all that it means. As long as you were living on the other side of the street, even if I did not see you for a week at a time, it did not matter; for I could have you at any moment, and that was as good as living together. But now — well, it's not out of the world, after all. But remember, don't try to lift too much, or hurt yourself in your work. And when any of your things are torn, send them to me — I'll mend them for you, and continue to knit for you. And now, come, let us go to the churchyard."

Damie objected to this plan, making the plea that he felt the parting heavy enough, and did not want to make it any heavier. His sister gave in. He took off his father's clothes again, and Barefoot packed them in the sack she had once worn as a cloak in the days when she kept the geese. This sack still bore her father's name upon it, and she charged Damie specially to send her back the sack at the first opportunity.

The brother and sister went out together. A cart belonging to Hirlingen was passing through the village; Damie hailed it, and quickly loaded his possessions on it. Then he

walked with his sister, hand in hand, out of the village, and Barefoot sought to cheer him up by saying:

"Do you remember the riddle I asked you there by the oven?"

"No."

"Think: What is best about the oven?"

"No."

"Of the oven this is best, 'tis said,
That it never itself doth eat the bread."

"Yes, you can be cheerful — you're going to stay home."

"But it was your own wish to go away. And you can be cheerful, too, if you only try hard enough."

In silence she walked on with her brother to the Holderwasen. There, under the wild pear-tree, she said:

"Here we will say good-by. God bless you, and don't be afraid of anything!"

They shook hands warmly, and then Damie walked on toward Hirlingen, and Barefoot turned back toward the village. Not until she got to the foot of the hill, where Damie could not see her, did she venture to lift up her apron and wipe away the tears that were running down her cheeks.

[Amrei and Damie were separated for three years. During this time the girl made herself more and more liked and respected by everybody, not only on account of her pleasant ways and general helpfulness, but also on account of her self-sacrificing devotion to her unappreciative brother. While her going barefoot and having been a goose-girl caused her to be the victim of more or less raillery, still nobody meant it at all seriously unless it was Rose, Farmer Rodel's youngest daughter, who was jealous of Amrei's popularity. One day when Amrei was standing by her window, she heard the fire-bell ringing.]

"There's a fire at Scheckennarre's, at Hirlingen!" was the cry outside. The engine was brought out, and Barefoot climbed upon it and rode away with the firemen.

"My Damie! My Damie!" she kept repeating to herself in great alarm. But it was day-time, and in the day-time

people could not be burned to death in a fire. And sure enough, when they arrived at Hirlingen, the house was already in ashes. Beside the road, in an orchard, stood Damie in the act of tying two piebalds,—fine, handsome horses,—to a tree; and oxen, bulls, and cows were all running about in confusion.

They stopped the engine to let Barefoot get off, and with a cry of "God be praised that nothing has happened to you!" she hurried toward her brother. Damie, however, made no reply, and stood with both hands resting on the neck of one of the horses.

"What is it? Why don't you speak? Have you hurt yourself?"

"I have not hurt myself, but the fire has hurt me."

"What's the matter?"

"All I have is lost—all my clothes and my little bit of money! I've nothing now but what's on my back."

"And are father's clothes burnt too?"

"Are they fireproof?" replied Damie, angrily. "Don't ask such stupid questions!"

Barefoot was ready to cry at this ungracious reception by her brother; but she quickly remembered, as if by intuition, that misfortune in its first shock often makes people harsh, unkind, and quarrelsome. So she merely said:

"Thank God that you have escaped with your life! Father's clothes—to be sure, in those there's something lost that cannot be replaced—but sooner or later they would have been worn out anyway."

"All your chattering will do no good," said Damie, still stroking the horse. "Here I stand like a miserable outcast. If the horses here could talk, they'd tell a different story. But I am born to misfortune—whatever I do that's good, is of no use. And yet—" He could say no more; his voice faltered.

"What has happened?"

"There are the horses, and the cows, and the oxen—not one of them was burned. Look, that horse over there

tore my shirt when I was dragging him out of the stable. This nigh horse here did me no harm — he knows me. Eh, Humple, you know me, don't you? We know each other, don't we?'' The horse laid his head across the neck of the other and stared at Damie, who went on:

''And when I joyfully went to tell the farmer that I had saved all his cattle, he said: 'You needn't have done it — they were all well insured, and I would have been paid good money for them.' 'Yes,' thinks I to myself, 'but to have let the poor beasts die, is that nothing? If a thing's paid for, is that all?' The farmer must have read in my face what I was thinking of, for he says to me: 'Of course, you saved your clothes and your property?' And then I says: 'No, not a stitch. I ran out to the stable directly.' And then he says: 'You're a noodle!' 'What?' says I, 'You're insured? — Well then, if the cattle would have been paid for, my clothes shall be paid for — and some of my dead father's clothes were among them, and fourteen guilders, and my watch, and my pipe.' And says he: 'Go smoke it! My property is insured, but not my servant's property.' And I says: 'We'll see about that — I'll take it to court!' Whereupon he says: 'Now you may go at once. Threatening a lawsuit is the same as giving notice. I would have given you a few guilders, but now you shan't have a farthing. And now, hurry up — away with you!' And so here I am. And I think I ought to take my nigh horse with me, for I saved his life, and he would be glad to go with me, wouldn't you? But I have never learned to steal, and I shouldn't know what to do now. The best thing for me to do is to jump into the water. For I shall never amount to anything as long as I live, and I have nothing now.''

''But I still have something, and I will help you out.''

''No, I won't do that any longer — always depending upon you. You have a hard enough time earning what you have.''

Barefoot tried to comfort her brother, and succeeded so

far that he consented to go home with her. But they had scarcely gone a hundred paces, when they heard something trotting along behind them. It was the horse; he had broken loose and had followed Damie, who was obliged to drive back the creature he was so fond of by flinging stones at it.

Damie was ashamed of his misfortune, and would hardly show his face to any one; for it is a peculiarity of weak natures that they feel their strength, not in their own self-respect, but always wish to show how much they can really do by some visible achievement. Misfortune they regard as evidence of their own weakness, and if they cannot hide it, they hide themselves.

Damie would go no farther than the first houses in the village. Black Marianne gave him a coat that had belonged to her slain husband; Damie felt a terrible repugnance at putting it on, and Amrei, who had before spoken of her father's coat as something sacred, now found just as many arguments to prove that there was nothing in a coat after all, and that it did not matter in the least who had once worn it.

Coaly Mathew, who lived not far from Black Marianne, took Damie as his assistant at tree-felling and charcoal-burning. This solitary life pleased Damie best; for he only wanted to wait until the time came when he could be a soldier, and then he would enter the army as a substitute and remain a soldier all his life. For in a soldier's life there is justice and order, and no one has brothers and sisters, and no one has his own house, and a man is provided with clothing and meat and drink; and if there should be a war, why a brave soldier's death is after all the best.

Such were the sentiments that Damie expressed one Sunday in Mossbrook Wood, when Barefoot came out to the charcoal-burner's to bring her brother yeast, and meal, and tobacco. She wanted to show him how — in addition to the general charcoal-burner's fare, which consists of bread baked with yeast — he might make the dumplings he pre-

pared for himself taste better. But Damie would not listen to her; he said he preferred to have them just as they were — he rather liked to swallow bad food when he might have had better; and altogether, he derived a kind of satisfaction from self-neglect, until he should some day be decked out as a soldier.

Barefoot fought against this continual looking forward to a future time, and this loss of time in the present. She was always wanting to put some life into Damie, who rather enjoyed being indolent and pitying himself. Indeed, he seemed to find a sort of satisfaction in his downward course, for it gave him an opportunity to pity himself to his heart's content, and did not require him to make any physical exertion. With great difficulty Barefoot managed to prevail so far that he at least bought an ax of his own out of his earnings; and it was his father's ax, which Coaly Mathew had bought at the auction in the old days.

Barefoot often came back out of the Wood in profound despair, but this state of mind never lasted long. Her inward confidence in herself, and the natural cheerfulness that was in her, involuntarily burst forth from her lips in song; and anybody who did not know her, would never have thought that Barefoot either had a care then, or ever had had one in all her life.

The satisfaction arising from the feeling that she was sturdily and untiringly doing her duty, and acting as a Samaritan to Black Marianne and Damie, impressed an indelible cheerfulness on her countenance; in the whole house there was no one who could laugh so heartily as Barefoot. Old Farmer Rodel declared that her laughter sounded like the song of a quail, and because she was always serviceable and respectful to him, he gave her to understand that he would remember her in his will. Barefoot did not pay much attention to this or build much upon it; she looked only for the wages to which she had a true and honest claim; and what she did, she did from an inward feeling of benevolence, without expectation of reward.

Chapter VIII

"sack and ax"

Scheckennarre's house was duly rebuilt, and in handsomer style than before; and the winter came, and with it the drawing for recruits. Never had there been greater lamentation over a "lucky number" than arose when Damie drew one and was declared exempt. He was in complete despair, and Barefoot almost shared his grief; for she looked upon this soldiering as a capital method of setting Damie up, and of breaking him of his slovenly habits. Still she said to him:

"Take this as a sign that you are to depend upon yourself now, and to be a man; for you still behave like a little child that can't shift for itself and has to be fed."

"You're reproaching me now for feeding upon you."

"No, I didn't mean that. Don't be so touchy all the time — always standing there as if to say: 'Who's going to do anything for me, good or bad?' Strike about for yourself."

"That's just what I am going to do, and I shall strike with a good swing," said Damie.

For a long time he would not state what his real intention was; but he walked through the village with his head singularly erect and spoke freely to everybody; he worked diligently in the forest with the woodcutters, having his father's ax and with it almost the bodily strength of him who had swung it so sturdily in the days that were gone.

One evening in the early part of the spring, when Barefoot met him on his way back from Mossbrook Wood, he asked, taking the ax from his shoulder and holding it up before her:

"Where do you think this is going?"

"Into the forest," answered Barefoot. "But it won't go alone — there must be a chopper."

"You are right; but it's going to its brother — and one

will chop on this side and another will chop on that side, and then the trees crash and roar like cannons, and still you will hear nothing of it — and yet *you* may, if you wish to, but no one else in this place."

"I don't understand one peck of all your bushel," answered Barefoot. "Speak out — I'm too old to guess riddles now."

"Well, I'm going to uncle in America."

"Indeed? Going to start to-day?" said Barefoot, laughing. "Do you remember how Martin, the mason's boy, once called up to his mother through the window: 'Mother, throw me out a clean pocket-handkerchief — I'm going to America!' Those who were going to fly so quickly are all still here."

"You'll see how much longer I shall be here," said Damie; and without another word he went into Coaly Mathew's house.

Barefoot felt like laughing at Damie's ridiculous plan, but she could not; she felt that there was some meaning in it. And that very night, when everybody was in bed, she went to her brother and declared once for all that she would not go with him. She thought thus to conquer him; but Damie replied quickly:

"I'm not tied to you!" and became the more confirmed in his plan.

Then there suddenly welled up in the girl's mind once more all that flood of reflections that had come upon her once in her childhood; but this time she did not ask advice of the tree, as if it could have answered her. All her deliberations brought her to this one conclusion: "He's right in going, and I'm right, too, in staying here." She felt inwardly glad that Damie could make such a bold resolve — at any rate, it showed manly determination. And although she felt a deep sorrow at the thought of being henceforth alone in the wide world, she nevertheless thought it right that her brother should thrust forth his hand thus boldly and independently.

Still, she did not yet quite believe him. The next evening she waited for him and said:

"Don't tell anybody about your plan to emigrate, or you'll be laughed at if you don't carry it out."

"You're right," answered Damie; "but it's not for that. I'm not afraid to bind myself before other people; so surely as I have five fingers on this hand, so surely shall I go before the cherries are ripe here, if I have to beg, yes, even to steal, in order to get off. There's only one thing I'm sorry about — and that is that I must go away without playing Scheckennarre a trick that he'd remember to the end of his days."

"That's the true braggart's way! That's the real way to ruin!" cried Barefoot; "to go off and leave a feeling of revenge behind one! Look, over yonder lie our parents. Come with me — come with me to their graves and say that again there if you can. Do you know who it is that turns out to be a no-good? — the boy who lets himself be spoiled! Give up that ax! You are not worthy to have your hand where father had his hand, unless you tear that thought out of your mind, root and branch! Give up that ax! No man shall have that who talks of stealing and of murdering! Give up that ax, or I don't know what I may do!"

Then Damie, in a frightened tone, replied:

"It was only a thought. Believe me I never intended to do it — I can't do anything of that kind. But because they always call me "skittle-boy," I thought I ought for once to threaten and swear and strike as they do. But you are right; — look, if you like, I'll go this very day to Scheckennarre and tell him that my heart doesn't cherish a single hard thought against him."

"You need not do that — that would be too much. But because you listen to reason, I will help you all I can."

"It would be best if you went with me."

"No, I can't do that — I don't know why, but I can't. But I have not sworn not to go — if you write to me that

you are doing well at uncle's, then I'll come after you. But to go out into the fog, where one knows nothing — well, I'm not fond of making changes anyway, and after all I'm doing fairly well here. But now let us consider how you are to get away."

Damie's savings were very trifling, and Barefoot's were not enough to make up the deficiency. Damie declared that the parish ought to give him a handsome contribution; but his sister would not hear of it, saying that this ought to be the last resource, when everything else had failed. She did not explain what else she was going to try. Her first idea, naturally, was to make application to Dame Landfried at Zumarshofen; but she knew what a bad appearance a begging letter would make in the eyes of the rich farmer's wife, who perhaps would not have any ready money anyway. Then she thought of old Farmer Rodel, who had promised to remember her in his will; could he be induced to give her now what he intended to give her later on, even if it should be less? Then again, it occurred to her that perhaps Scheckennarre, who was now getting on especially well, might be induced to contribute something.

She said nothing to Damie about all this. But when she examined his wardrobe, and with great difficulty induced Black Marianne to let her have on credit some of the old woman's heaped-up stores of linen, and when she began to cut out this linen and sat up at night making shirts of it — all these steady and active preparations made Damie almost tremble. To be sure, he had acted all along as if his plan of emigrating were irrevocably fixed in his mind — and yet now he seemed almost bound to go, to be under compulsion, as if his sister's strong will were forcing him to carry out his design. And his sister seemed almost hard-hearted to him, as if she were thrusting him away to get rid of him. He did not, indeed, dare to say this openly, but he began to grumble and complain a good deal about it, and Barefoot looked upon this as suppressed grief over parting — the feeling that would gladly take advantage of little obstacles

and represent them as hindrances to the fulfilment of a purpose one would gladly leave unfulfilled.

First of all she went to old Farmer Rodel, and in plain words asked him to let her have at once the legacy that he had promised her long ago.

The old man replied:

"Why do you press it so?" Can't you wait? What's the matter with you?"

"Nothing's the matter with me, but I can't wait."

Then she told him that she was fitting out her brother who was going to emigrate to America. This was a good chance for old Rodel; he could now give his natural hardness the appearance of benevolence and prudent forethought. Accordingly he declared to Barefoot that he would not give her one farthing now, for he did not want to be responsible for her ruining herself for that brother of hers.

Barefoot then begged him to be her advocate with Scheckennarre. At last he was induced to consent to this; and he took great credit to himself for thus consenting to go begging to a man he did not know on behalf of a stranger. He kept postponing the fulfilment of his promise from day to day, but Barefoot did not cease from reminding him of it; and so, at last, he set forth.

But, as might have been anticipated, he came back empty-handed; for the first thing Scheckennarre did was to ask how much Farmer Rodel himself was going to give, and when he heard that Rodel, for the present, was not going to give anything, his course, too, was clear and he followed it.

When Barefoot told Black Marianne how hurt she felt at this hard-heartedness, the old woman said:

"Yes, that's just how people are! If a man were to jump into the water tomorrow and be taken out dead, they would all say: 'If he had only told me what was amiss with him, I should have been very glad to help him in every way and to have given him something. What would I not give now, if I could restore him to life!' But to keep a man alive, they won't stir a finger."

Strangely enough, the very fact that the whole weight of things always fell upon Barefoot made her bear it all more easily. "Yes, one must always depend upon oneself alone," was her secret motto; and instead of letting obstacles discourage her, she only strove harder to surmount them. She scraped together and turned into money whatever of her possessions she could lay hands on; even the valuable necklace she had received in the old days from Farmer Landfried's wife went its way to the widow of the old sexton, a worthy woman who supported herself in her widowhood by lending money at high interest on security; the ducat, too, which she had once thrown after Severin in the churchyard, was brought into requisition. And, marvelous to relate, old Farmer Rodel offered to obtain a considerable contribution from the Village Council, of which he was a member; he was fond of doing virtuous and benevolent things with the public money!

Still it almost frightened Barefoot when he announced to her, after a few days, that everything had been granted — but upon the one condition, that Damie should entirely give up his right to live in the village. Of course, that had been understood from the first — no one had expected anything else; but still, now that it was an express condition, it seemed like a very formidable matter to have no home anywhere. Barefoot said nothing about this thought to Damie, who seemed cheerful and of good courage. Black Marianne, especially, continued to urge him strongly to go; for she would have been glad to send the whole village away to foreign parts, if only she could at last get tidings of her John. And now she had firmly taken up the notion that he had sailed across the seas. Crappy Zachy had indeed told her, that the reason she could not cry any more was because the ocean, the great salty deep, absorbed the tears which one might be disposed to shed for one who was on the other shore.

Barefoot received permission from her employers to accompany her brother when he went to town to conclude

the arrangement for his passage with the agent. Greatly were both of them astonished when they learned, on arriving at the office, that this had already been done. The Village Council had already taken the necessary steps, and Damie was to have his rights and corresponding obligations as one of the village poor. On board the ship, before it sailed out into the wide ocean, he would have to sign a paper, attesting his embarkation, and not until then would the money be paid.

The brother and sister returned sorrowfully to the village. Damie had been seized with a fit of his old despondency, because a thing had now to be carried out which he himself had wished. And Barefoot herself felt deeply grieved at the thought that her brother was, in a way, to be expelled from his native land. At the boundary-line Damie said aloud to the sign-post, on which the name of the village and of the district were painted:

"You there! I don't belong to you any longer, and all the people who live here are no more to me than you are."

Barefoot started to cry; but she resolved within herself that this should be the last time until her brother's departure, and until he was fairly gone. And she kept her word to herself.

The people in the village said that Barefoot had no heart, because her eyes were not wet when her brother went away. People like to see tears actually shed — for what do they care about those that are shed in secret? But Barefoot was calm and brave.

Only during the last days before Damie set out did she for the first time fail in her duty; for she neglected her work by being with Damie all the time. She let Rose upbraid her for it, and merely said: "You are right." But still she ran after her brother everywhere — she did not want to lose a minute of his company as long as he was there. She very likely felt that she might be able to do something special for him at any moment, or say something special that would be of use to him all his life; and

she was vexed with herself for finding nothing but quite ordinary things to say, and for even quarreling with him sometimes.

Oh, these hours of parting! How they oppress the heart! How all the past and all the future seem crowded together into one moment, and one knows not how to set about anything rightly, and only a look or a touch must tell all that is felt!

Still Amrei found good words to speak. When she counted out her brother's stock of linen she said:

"These are good, respectable shirts — keep yourself respectable and good in them."

And when she packed everything into the big sack, on which her father's name was still to be seen, she said:

"Bring this back full of glittering gold; then you shall see how glad they will be to give you back the right to live here. And Farmer Rodel's Rose, if she's still unmarried, will jump over seven houses to get you."

And when she laid their father's ax in the large chest, she said:

"How smooth the handle is! How often it has slipped through our father's hand. I fancy I can still feel his touch upon it! So now I have a motto for you — 'Sack and Ax.' Working and gathering in, those are the best things in life — they make one keep cheerful and well and happy. God keep you! And say to yourself very often — 'Sack and Ax.' I shall do the same, and that shall be our motto, our remembrance, our call to each other when we are far, far apart, and until you write to me, or come to fetch me, or do what you can, as God shall will it. 'Sack and Ax' — yes, it's all included in that; so one can treasure up everything — all thoughts and all that one has earned!"

And when Damie was sitting up in the wagon, and for the last time gave her his hand, for a long time she would not release it. And when at last he drove away, she called out after him with a loud voice:

"'Sack and Ax' — don't forget that!"

He looked back, waved his hand to her, and then — he was gone.

Benjamin Vautier

HE GAVE HER HIS HAND FOR THE LAST TIME

Chapter IX

An Uninvited Guest

"Glory to America!" the village watchman, to the amusement of all, cried several nights when he called out the hours, in place of the usual thanksgiving to God. Crappy Zachy, being a man of no consideration himself, was fond of speaking evil of the poor when he found himself among what he called "respectable people," and on Sunday when he came out of church, or on an afternoon when he sat on the long bench outside the "Heathcock," he would say:

"Columbus was a real benefactor. From what did he not deliver us? Yes, America is the pig-trough of the Old World, and into it everything that can't be used in the kitchen is dumped — cabbage and turnips and all sorts of things. And for the piggies who live in the castle behind the house, and understand French — 'Oui! Oui!' — there's very good feeding there."

In the general dearth of interesting subjects, Damie and his emigrating naturally formed the main topic of conversation for a considerable time, and the members of the Council praised their own wisdom in having rid the place of a person who would certainly have come to be a burden on the community. For a man who goes driving about from one trade to another is sure to drive himself into ruin eventually.

Of course, there were plenty of good-natured people who reported to Barefoot all that was said of her brother, and told her how he was made a laughing-stock. But Barefoot merely smiled. When Damie's first letter came from Bremen — nobody had ever thought that he could write so properly — then she exulted before the eyes of men, and read the letter aloud several times; but in secret she was sorry to have lost such a brother, probably forever. She reproached herself for not having put him forward enough,

for it was now evident what a sharp lad Damie was, and so good too! He wanted to take leave of the whole village as he had taken leave of the post at the boundary-line, and he now filled almost a whole page with remembrances to different people, calling each one "the dear" or "the good" or "the worthy." Barefoot reaped a great deal of praise everywhere she delivered these greetings, and each time pointed to the precise place, and said:

"See — there it stands!"

For a time Barefoot was silent and abstracted; she seemed to repent of having let her brother go, or of having refused to go with him. Formerly she had always been heard singing in the stable and barn, in the kitchen and chamber, and when she went out with the scythe over her shoulder and the grass-cloth under her arm; but now she was silent. She seemed to be making an effort to restrain herself. Still there was one time when she allowed people to hear her voice again; in the evening, when she put Farmer Rodel's children to bed, she sang incessantly, even long after the children were asleep. Then she would hurry over to Black Marianne's and supply her with wood and water and whatever else the old woman wanted.

On Sunday afternoons, when everybody was out for a good time, Barefoot often used to stand quiet and motionless at the door of her house, looking out into the world and at the sky in dreamy, far-off meditation, wondering where Damie was now and how he was getting on. And then she would stand and gaze for a long time at an overturned plow, or watch a fowl clawing in the sand. When a vehicle passed through the village, she would look up and say, almost aloud:

"They are driving to somebody. On all the roads of the world there is nobody coming to me, and no one thinking of me. And do I not belong here too?"

And then she would make believe to herself that she was expecting something, and her heart would beat faster, as if for somebody who was coming. And involuntarily the old song rose to her lips:

All the brooklets in the wide world,
They run their way to the sea;
But there's no one in this wide world,
Who can open my heart for me.

"I wish I were as old as you," she once said to Black Marianne, after dreaming in this way.

"Be glad that a wish is but a word," replied the old woman. "When I was your age I was merry; and down there at the plaster-mill I weighed a hundred and thirty-two pounds."

"But you are the same at one time as at another, while I am not at all — even."

"If one wants to be 'even' one had better cut one's nose off, and then one's face will be even all over. You little simpleton! Don't fret your young years away, for nobody will give them back to you; and the old ones will come of their own accord."

Black Marianne did not find it very difficult to comfort Barefoot; only when she was alone, did a strange anxiety come over her. What did it mean?

A wonderful rumor was now pervading the village; for many days there had been talk of a wedding that was to be celebrated at Endringen, with such festivities as had not been seen in the country within the memory of man. The eldest daughter of Dominic and Ameile — whom we know, from Lehnhold — was to marry a rich wood-merchant from the Murg Valley, and it was said that there would be such merry-making as had never yet been seen.

The day drew nearer and nearer. Wherever two girls meet, they draw each other behind a hedge or into the hallway of a house, and there's no end to their talking, though they declare emphatically that they are in a particular hurry. It is said that everybody from the Oberland is coming, and everybody from the Murg Valley for a distance of sixty miles! For it is a large family. At the Town-hall pump, there the true gossiping goes on; but not a single girl will own to having a new dress, lest she should lose the pleasure of seeing the surprise and admiration of

her companions, when the day arrived. In the excitement of asking and answering questions, the duty of water-carrying is forgotten, and Barefoot, who arrives last, is the first to leave with her bucketful of water. What is the dance to her? And yet she feels as if she hears music everywhere.

The next day Barefoot had much running back and forth to do in the house; for she was to dress Rose for the great occasion. She received many an unseen knock while she was plaiting her hair, but bore them in silence. Rose had a fine head of hair, and she was determined it should make a fine show. Today she wished to try something new with it; she wanted to have a Maria-Theresa braid, as a certain artistic arrangement of fourteen braids is called in those parts. That would create a sensation as something new. Barefoot succeeded in accomplishing the difficult task, but she had scarcely finished when Rose tore it all down in anger; and with her hair hanging down over her brow and face, she looked wild enough.

But for all that she was handsome and stately, and very plump; her whole demeanor seemed to say: "There must be not less than four horses in the house into which I marry." And many farmers' sons were, indeed, courting her, but she did not seem to care to make up her mind in favor of any one of them. She now decided to keep to the country fashion of having two braids, interwoven with red ribbons, hanging down her back and reaching almost to the ground. At last she stood adorned and ready.

But now she had to have a nosegay. She had allowed her own flowers to run wild; and in spite of all objections, Barefoot was ultimately obliged to yield to her importunities and rob her own cherished plants on her window-sill of almost all their blossoms. Rose also demanded the little rosemary plant; but Barefoot would rather have torn that in pieces than give it up. Rose began to jeer and laugh, and then to scold and mock the stupid goose-girl, who gave herself such obstinate airs, and who had been taken into the

house only out of charity. Barefoot did not reply; but she turned a glance at Rose which made the girl cast down her eyes.

And now a red, woolen rose had come loose on Rose's left shoe, and Barefoot had just knelt down to sew it on carefully, when Rose said, half ashamed of her own behavior, and yet half jeeringly:

"Barefoot, I will have it so — you must come to the dance today."

"Do not mock so. What do you want of me?"

"I am not mocking," persisted Rose, still in a somewhat jeering tone. "You, too, ought to dance once, for you are a young girl, and there will be some of your equals at the wedding — our stable-boy is going, or perhaps some farmer's son will dance with you. I'll send you some one who is without a partner."

"Let me be in peace — or I shall prick you."

"My sister-in-law is right," said the young farmer's wife, who, until now, had sat silent. "I'll never give you a good word again if you don't go to the dance today. Come — sit down, and I will get you ready."

Barefoot felt herself flushing crimson as she sat there while her mistress dressed her and brushed her hair away from her face and turned it all back; and she almost sank from her chair, when the farmer's wife said:

"I am going to arrange your hair as the Allgau girls wear it. That will suit you very well, for you look like an Allgau girl yourself — sturdy, and brown, and round. You look like Dame Landfried's daughter at Zusmarshofen."

"Why like her daughter? What made you think of her?" asked Barefoot, and she trembled all over.

How was it that she was just now reminded again of Dame Landfried, who had been in her mind from childhood, and who had once appeared to her like the benevolent spirit in a fairy-tale? But Barefoot had no ring that she could turn and cause her to appear; but mentally she could conjure her up, and that she often did, almost involuntarily.

"Hold still, or I'll pull your hair," said the farmer's wife; and Barefoot sat motionless, scarcely daring to breathe. And while her hair was being parted in the middle, and she sat with her arms folded and allowed her mistress to do what she liked with her, and while her mistress, who was expecting a baby very soon, bustled about her, she really felt as if she had suddenly been bewitched; she did not say a word for fear of breaking the charm, but sat with her eyes cast down in modest submission.

"I wish I could dress you thus for your own wedding," said the farmer's wife, who seemed to be overflowing with kindness today. "I should like to see you mistress of a respectable farm, and you would not be a bad bargain for any man; but nowadays such things don't happen, for money runs after money. Well, do you be contented — so long as I live you shall not want for anything; and if I die — and I don't know, but I seem to fear the heavy hour so much this time — look, you will not forsake my children, but will be a mother to them, will you not?"

"Oh, good heavens! How can you think of such a thing?" cried Barefoot, and the tears ran down her cheeks. "That is a sin; for one may commit a sin by letting thoughts enter one's mind that are not right."

"Yes, yes, you may be right," said the farmer's wife. "But wait — sit still a moment; I will bring you my necklace and put it around your neck."

"No, pray don't do that! I can wear nothing that is not my own; I should sink to the ground for shame of myself."

"Yes, but you can't go as you are. Or have you, perhaps, something of your own?"

Hereupon Barefoot said that she, to be sure, had a necklace which had been presented to her as a child by Dame Landfried, but that on account of Damie's emigration it was in pledge with the sexton's widow.

Barefoot was then told to sit still and to promise not to look at herself in the glass until the farmer's wife returned; and the latter hurried away to get the ornament, herself being surety for the money lent upon it.

What a thrill now went through Barefoot's soul as she sat there! She who had always waited upon others was now being waited upon herself! — and indeed almost as if under a spell. She was almost afraid of the dance; for she was now being treated so well, so kindly, and perhaps at the dance she might be pushed about and ignored, and all her outward adornment and inward happiness would go for nothing.

"But no," she said to herself. "If I get nothing more out of it than the thought that I have been happy, that will be enough; if I had to undress right now and to stay at home, I should still be happy."

The farmer's wife now returned with the necklace, and was as full of censure for the sexton's wife for having demanded such usurious interest from a poor girl, as she was full of praise for the ornament itself. She promised to pay the loan that very day and to deduct it gradually from Barefoot's wages.

Now at last Barefoot was allowed to look at herself. The mistress herself held the glass before her, and both of their faces glowed and gleamed with mutual joy.

"I don't know myself! I don't know myself!" Barefoot kept repeating, feeling her face with both hands. "Good heavens, if my mother could only see me now! But she will certainly bless you from heaven for being so good to me, and she will stand by you in the heavy hour — you need fear nothing."

"But now you must make another kind of face," said her mistress, "not such a pitiful one. But that will come when you hear the music."

"I fancy I hear it already," replied Barefoot. "Yes, listen, there it is!"

And, in truth, a large wagon decorated with green boughs was just driving through the village. Seated in the wagon were all the musicians; in the midst of them stood Crappy Zachy blowing his trumpet as if he were trying to wake the dead.

And now there was no more staying in the village; every one was hastening to be up and away. Light, Bernese carriages, with one and two horses, some from the village itself and some from the neighboring villages, were chasing each other as if they were racing. Rose mounted to her brother's side on the front seat of their chaise, and Barefoot climbed up into the basket-seat behind. So long as they were passing through the village, she kept her eyes looking down—she felt so ashamed. Only when she passed the house that had been her parents' did she venture to look up; Black Marianne waved her hand from the window, the red cock crowed on the wood-pile, and the old tree seemed to nod and wish her good luck.

Now they drove through the valley where Manz was breaking stones, and now over the Holderwasen where an old woman was keeping the geese. Barefoot gave her a friendly nod.

"Good heavens!" she thought. "How does it happen that I sit here so proudly driving along in festive attire? It is a good hour's ride to Endringen, and yet it seems as if we had only just started."

The word was now given to alight, and Rose was immediately surrounded by all kinds of friends. Several of them asked:

"Is that not a sister of your brother's wife?"

"No, she's only our maid," answered Rose.

Several beggars from Haldenbrunn who were here, looked at Barefoot in astonishment, evidently not recognizing her; and not until they had stared at her for a long time did they cry out: "Why, it's Little Barefoot!"

"She is only our maid." That little word "only" smote painfully on the girl's heart. But she recovered herself quickly and smiled; for a voice within her said: "Don't let your pleasure be spoiled by a single word. If you begin anything new, you are sure to step on thorns at first."

Rose took Barefoot aside and said:

"You may go for the present to the dancing-room, or wherever you like, if you have any acquaintances in the place. When the music begins I shall want to see you again."

And so Barefoot stood forsaken, as it were, and feeling as if she had stolen the clothes she had on, and did not belong to the company at all, as if she were an intruder.

"How comes it that thou goest to such a wedding?" she asked herself; and she would have liked to go home again. She decided to take a walk through the village. She passed by the beautiful house built for Brosi, where there was plenty of life today, too; for the wife of that high official was spending the summer here with her sons and daughters. Barefoot turned back toward the village again, looking neither to the right nor to the left, and yet wishing that somebody would accost her that she might have a companion. On the outskirts of the village she encountered a smart-looking young man riding a white horse. He was attired in farmer's dress, but of a strange kind, and looked very proud. He pulled up his horse, rested his right hand with the whip in it on his hip, and patting the animal's neck with his left, called out:

"Good morning, pretty mistress! Tired of dancing already?"

"I'm tired of idle questions already," was the reply.

The horseman rode on. Barefoot sat for a long time behind a hedge, while many thoughts flitted through her mind. Her cheeks glowed with a flush caused by anger at herself for having made so sharp a reply to a harmless question, by bashfulness, and by a strange, inward emotion. And involuntarily she began to hum the old song:

"There were two lovers in Allgau
Who loved each other so dear."

She had begun the day in expectation of joy, and now she wished that she were dead. She thought to herself: "How good it would be to fall asleep here behind this hedge and never to awake again. You are not to have any

joy in this life, why should you run about so long? The grasshoppers are chirping in the grass, a warm fragrance is rising from the earth, a linnet is singing incessantly and seems to dive into himself with his voice and to bring up finer and finer notes, and yet seems to be unable to say with his whole heart what he has to say. Up in the air the larks, too, are singing, every one for himself — no one listens to the others or joins in with the others — and yet everything is — "

Never in her life had Amrei fallen asleep in broad daylight, or if ever, not in the morning. She had now drawn her handkerchief over her eyes, and the sunbeams were kissing her closed lips, which, even in sleep, were pressed together defiantly, and the redness of her chin had become deeper. She had slept about an hour, when she awoke with a start. The smart-looking young man on the white horse was riding toward her, and the horse had just lifted up his fore feet to bring them down on her chest. It was only a dream, and Amrei gazed around her as if she had fallen from the sky. She saw with astonishment where she was, and looked at herself in wonder. But the sound of music from the village soon aroused the spirit of life within her, and with new strength she walked back and found that everything had become more lively. She noticed that she felt more rested after the many things that she had experienced that day. And now let only the dancing begin! She would dance until the next morning, and never rest, and never get tired!

The fresh glow following the sleep of childhood was on her face, and everybody looked at her in astonishment. She went to the dancing-room; the music was playing, but in an empty room — for no dancers had come yet. Only the girls who had been hired to wait upon the guests were dancing with one another. Crappy Zachy looked at Barefoot for a long time, and then shook his head; evidently he did not know her. Amrei crept along close to the wall, and

so out of the room again. She ran across Farmer Dominic, whose face was radiant with joy today.

"Beg pardon," said he; "does the mistress belong to the wedding guests?"

"No, I am only a maid. I came with Farmer Rodel's daughter, Rose."

"Good! Then go out to the kitchen and tell the mistress that I sent you, and that you are to help her. We can't have hands enough in my house today."

"Because it's you I'll gladly go," said Amrei, and she set out at once. On the way she thought how Dominic himself had once been a servant, and— "Yes, such things happen only once in a century. It cost him many a pang before he came to the farm—and that's a pity."

Ameile, Dominic's wife, gave a friendly welcome to the new comer, who offered her services and at the same time took off her jacket, asking if she might borrow a large apron with a bib on it. But the farmer's wife insisted that Amrei should satisfy her own hunger and thirst before she set about serving others. Amrei consented without much ceremony, and won Ameile's heart by the first words she spoke; for she said:

"I will fall to at once, for I must confess that I am hungry, and I don't want to put you to the trouble of having to urge me."

Amrei now remained in the kitchen and handed the dishes to the waitresses in such a knowing way, and managed and arranged everything so well, that the mistress said:

"You two Amreis, you and my brother's daughter, can manage all this, and I will stay with the guests."

Amrei of Siebenhofen, who was nicknamed the "Butter Countess," and who was known far and wide as proud and stubborn, was very friendly with Barefoot. Once, indeed, the mistress said to the latter:

"It's a pity that you are not a boy; I believe that Amrei would marry you on the spot, and not send you home, as she does all of her suitors."

"I have a brother who's still single — but he's in America," replied Barefoot, laughing.

"Let him stay there," said the Butter Countess; "it would be better if we could send all the men folk away and be here by ourselves."

Amrei did not leave the kitchen until everything had been put back in its proper place; and when she took off her apron it was still as white and unruffled as when she had put it on.

"You'll be tired and not able to dance," said the farmer's wife, when Amrei, with a present, finally took her leave.

"Why should I be tired? This was only play; and, believe me, I feel much better for having done something today. A whole day devoted to pleasure! I shouldn't know how to spend it, and I've no doubt that was why I felt so sad this morning — I felt that something was missing. But now I feel quite ready for a holiday — quite out of harness. Now I feel just like dancing, if I could only find partners."

Ameile did not know how to show greater honor to Barefoot than by leading her about the house, as if she were a wealthy farmer's wife, and showing her the large chest full of wedding presents in the bridal room. She opened the tall, blue cabinets, which had the name and the date painted upon them, and which were crammed full of linen and all sorts of things, all tied up with ribbons of various colors and decorated with artificial flowers. In the wardrobe there were at least thirty dresses, and nearby were the high beds, the cradle, the distaff with its beautiful spindles, and everywhere children's clothes were hanging, presents from the bride's former playmates.

"Oh, kind Heaven!" cried Barefoot; "how happy a child of such a house must be!"

"Are you envious?" said the farmer's wife; and then remembering that she was showing all these things to a poor girl, she added: "But believe me, fine clothes are not all; there are many happier who do not get as much as a stocking from their parents."

"Yes, yes, I know that. I am not envious of the beautiful things, but rather of the privilege that it gives your child to thank you and so many good people for the lovely things she has received from them. Such clothes from one's mother must keep one doubly warm."

The farmer's wife showed her fondness of Barefoot by accompanying the girl as far as the yard, as she would have done to a visitor who had eight horses in the stable.

There was already a great crowd of people assembled when Amrei arrived at the dancing-floor. At first she stood timidly on the threshold. In the empty courtyard, across which somebody hurried every now and then, a solitary gendarme was pacing up and down. When he saw Amrei coming along with a radiant face, he approached her and said:

"Good morning, Amrei! Art thou here too?"

Amrei started and turned quite pale. Had she done anything punishable? Had she gone into the stable with a naked light? She thought of her past life and could remember nothing; and yet he had addressed her as familiarly as if he had already arrested her once. With these thoughts flitting through her mind, she stood there trembling as if she were a criminal, and at last answered:

"Thank you. But I don't know why we should call each other 'thou.' Do you want anything of me?"

"Oh, how proud you are. You can answer me properly. I am not going to eat you up. Why are you so angry? Eh?"

"I am not angry, and I don't want to harm any one. I am only a foolish girl."

"Don't pretend to be so submissive—"

"How do you know what I am?"

"Because you flourish about so with that light."

"What? Where? Where have I flourished about with a light? I always take a lantern when I go out to the stable, but—"

The gendarme laughed and said:

"I mean your brown eyes—that's where the light is. Your eyes are like two balls of fire."

"Then get out of my way, lest you get burnt. You might get blown up with all that powder in your cartridge-box."

"There's nothing in it," said the gendarme, embarrassed, but wishing to make some kind of retort. "But you have scorched me already."

"I don't see where—you seem to be all right. But enough! Let me go."

"I'm not keeping you, you little crib-biter. You could lead a man a hard life, who was fond of you."

"Nobody need be fond of me," said Amrei; and she rushed away as if she had got loose from a chain.

She stood in the doorway where many spectators were crowded together. A new dance was just beginning, and she swayed back and forth with the music. The feeling that she had got the better of some one made her more cheerful than ever, and she would have taken up arms against the whole world, as well as against a single gendarme. But her tormentor soon appeared again; he posted himself behind Amrei and said all kinds of things to her. She made no answer and pretended not to hear him, every now and then nodding to the people as they danced by, as if she had been greeted by them. Only when the gendarme said:

"If I were allowed to marry, I'd take you."

She replied:

"Take me, indeed! But I shouldn't give myself!"

The gendarme was glad to have at least got an answer from her, and continued:

"And if I were allowed to dance, I would have one with you right now."

"I cannot dance," replied Amrei.

Just then the music ceased. Amrei pushed against the people in front of her, and made her way in to seek some retired corner. She heard some one behind her say:

"Why, she can dance better than anybody in this part of the country!"

Chapter X

ONLY A SINGLE DANCE

Down from the musicians' platform Crappy Zachy handed a glass to Amrei. She took a sip, and handed it back; and Crappy Zachy said:

"If you dance, Amrei, I'll play all my instruments so that the angels will come down from the sky and join in."

"Yes, but unless an angel comes down from the sky and asks me, I shall not get a partner," said Amrei, half in fun and half in sorrow. And then she began to wonder why there had to be a gendarme at a dance; but she did not hold to this thought long, but immediately went on to say to herself: "After all, he is a man like anybody else, even though he has a sword on; and before he became a gendarme, he was a lad like the rest. It must be a plague for him that he can't dance. But what's that to me? I, too, am obliged to be a mere spectator, and I don't get any money for it."

For a short time things went on in a much more quiet and moderate manner in the dancing-room. For the "English woman," as Agy, the wife of Severin, the building contractor, was still called, had come to the dance with her children. The rich wood-merchants set the champagne corks to popping and offered a glass to the English woman; she drank the health of the young couple and then made each one happy by a gracious word. A constant and complacent smile was lighting up the face of everybody. Agy honored many a young fellow who drank to her from the garlanded glasses, by sipping from hers in return. The old women, who sat near Barefoot, were loud in their praises of the English woman, and stood up a long time before she came when they saw her approaching to speak a few words to them. When Agy had gone away, the rejoicing, singing, dancing, stamping, and shouting broke out again with renewed vigor.

Farmer Rodel's foreman now came toward Amrei, and she felt a thrill of expectation. But the foreman said:

"Here, Barefoot, take care of my pipe for me while I am dancing." And after that several young girls from her village also came; from one she received a jacket, from another a cap, or a neckerchief, or a door-key. She let them hand it all over to her, and stood there with an ever-increasing load as one dance followed another. All the time she smiled quietly to herself, but nobody came to ask her to dance. Now a waltz was being played, so smoothly that one could have swum to it. And then a wild and furious galop; hurrah! now they are all hopping and stamping and jumping and panting in supreme delight. And how their eyes glitter! The old women who are sitting in the corner where Amrei is standing, complain of the dust and heat; but still, they don't go home. Then — suddenly Amrei starts; her eyes are fixed upon a handsome young man who is walking proudly to and fro among the crowd. It is the rider who had met her that morning, and whom she had snubbed in such a pert way. All eyes are fastened upon him as he comes forward, his right hand behind him, and his left holding a silver-mounted pipe. His silver watch-chain bobs up and down, and how beautiful is his black velvet jacket, and his loose black velvet trousers, and his red waistcoat! But more beautiful still is his round head with its curly, brown hair. His brow is white as snow; but from the eyes down his face is sunburnt, and a light, full beard covers his chin and cheeks.

"That's a bonny fellow," said one of the old women.

"And what heavenly blue eyes he has!" added another; "they are at once so roguish and so kind."

"Where can he be from? He's not from this neighborhood," said a third.

And a fourth observed:

"I'll wager he's another suitor for Amrei."

Barefoot started. What did this mean? What was that

she said? But she soon found out the meaning of it, for the first old lady resumed:

"Then I'm sorry for him; for the Butter Countess makes fools of all the men."

And so the Butter Countess's name was also Amrei.

The young stranger had passed through the room several times, turning his eyes from one side to the other. Then he suddenly stopped not far from Barefoot and beckoned to her. A hot flush overspread her face; she stood riveted to the spot and did not move a muscle. No, he certainly beckoned to somebody behind you; he cannot mean you. The stranger pressed forward and Amrei made way for him. He must be looking for some one else.

"No, it's you I want," said the lad, taking Barefoot's hand. "Will you dance?"

Amrei could not speak. But what need was there to speak? She threw everything she had in her arms down into a corner — jackets, neckerchiefs, caps, pipes, and door-keys — and stood there ready. The lad threw a dollar up to the musicians; and when Crappy Zachy saw Amrei on the arm of the stranger, he blew his trumpet until the very walls trembled. And to the blessed souls above no music can sound more beautiful than did this to Amrei. She danced she knew not how; she felt as if she were being carried in the stranger's arms, as if she were floating in the air, and there seemed to be no one else there. And, indeed, they both danced so well, that everybody involuntarily stopped to look at them.

"We are alone," said Amrei during the dance; and then she felt the warm breath of her partner as he answered:

"Oh that we were alone — alone in the world! Why cannot one go on dancing thus — on and on to the end of time."

"I feel," said Amrei, "just as if we were two doves flying through the air. Juhu! away into the heavens!" And "Juhu!" cried the lad gleefully, "Juhu!" And the sound shot up heavenward like a fiery rocket. "Juhu!"

cried Amrei, rejoicing with him. And on they danced with ever-increasing joy. Finally Amrei said:

"Tell me — is the music going on? Are the musicians still playing? I don't hear them any more."

"Of course they are still playing. Don't you hear them?"

"Yes, now I do," said Amrei. And now they stopped, for her partner probably felt that she was becoming giddy with happiness.

The stranger led Amrei to the table, and gave her wine to drink, and did not let go her hand. He lifted the Swedish ducat that hung from her necklace, and said:

"This ducat is in a good place."

"And it came from a good hand," answered Amrei. "That necklace was given to me when I was a little child."

"By a relative?"

"No, the lady was no relative."

"Dancing agrees with you apparently."

"Oh, indeed it does! You see, I'm obliged to jump around so much all the year around when nobody is playing for me — and therefore I enjoy it doubly now."

"You look as round as a ball," said the stranger in jest. "You must live where the food is good."

Amrei replied quickly:

"It's not the food itself that does it, but the way one enjoys it."

The stranger nodded; and after a pause, he spoke again, half questioningly:

"You are the daughter of Farmer — "

"No, I am a maid," replied Amrei, looking him full in the face. The stranger's eyes almost fell; the lids quivered, but he held them open by force. And this struggle and victory of the bodily eye seemed to be a symbol of what was going on within him. He felt almost inclined to leave the girl sitting there; but he resisted and conquered the impulse, and said:

"Come, let us have another dance."

He held her hand fast, and the pleasure and excitement

began again; but this time it was more quiet and moderate. Both of them seemed to feel that the sensation of being lifted to the sky was over and past; and this thought was evidently in Amrei's mind when she said:

"Well, we have been very happy together once, even if we don't see each other again in all our lives, and even though neither of us knows the other's name."

The youth nodded and said:

"You are right."

Amrei held the end of her braid between her lips in embarrassment, and after a pause spoke again:

"The enjoyment one has once had cannot be taken from one; and whoever you are, you need never repent of having given a poor girl a pleasure she will remember all her life."

"I don't repent of it," replied her partner. "But I know that you repent of having answered me so sharply this morning."

"Oh, yes, you are right there!" cried Amrei; and then the stranger said:

"Would you venture to go out into the field with me?"

"Yes."

"And do you trust me?"

"Yes."

"But what will your people say?"

"I have nobody but myself to give account of my actions to; I am an orphan."

Hand in hand the two went out of the dancing-room. Barefoot heard several people whispering and tittering behind her, but she kept her eyes fixed on the ground. She wondered if she had not ventured too far after all.

In the fields, where the first ears of wheat were beginning to sprout and still lay half concealed in their green sheaths, the two stopped and stood looking at each other in silence. For a long time neither said a word. But finally it was the man who broke the silence, by saying, half to himself:

"I wonder how it is that one, on first sight, can be so — so — I don't know — so confidential with a person? How is it one can read what is written in another's face?"

"Now we have set a poor soul free," said Amrei; "for you know, when two people think the same thought at the same time, they are said to set a soul free. And I was thinking the very words you just spoke."

"Indeed? And do you know why?"

"Yes."

"Will you tell me?"

"Why not? Look you; I have been a goose-keeper—"

At these words the stranger started again; but he pretended that something had fallen into his eye, and began to rub that organ vigorously, while Barefoot went on, undismayed:

"Look you; when one sits or lies alone out in the fields all day, one thinks of hundreds of things, and some of them are strange thoughts indeed. Just try it yourself, and you will certainly find it so. Every fruit-tree, if you look at it as a whole, has the appearance of the fruit it bears. Take the apple-tree; does it not look, spread out broad, and, as it were, in round pieces, like the apple itself? And the same is true of the pear-tree and the cherry-tree, if only you look at them in the right way. Look what a long trunk the cherry-tree has—like the stem of a cherry. And so I think—"

"Well, what do you think?"

"You'll laugh at me; but just as the fruit-trees look like the fruits they bear, so is it also with people; one can tell what they are at once by looking at them. But the trees, to be sure, always have honest faces, while people can dissemble theirs. But I am talking nonsense, am I not?"

"No, you have not kept geese for nothing," said the lad; and there was a strange mixture of feelings in the tone of his voice. "I like to talk with you. I should give you a kiss, if I were not afraid of doing what is wrong."

Barefoot trembled all over. She stooped to break off a flower, but did not break it. There was a long pause, and then the lad went on:

"We shall most likely never meet again, and so it is best as it is."

Hand in hand the two went back to the dancing-room. There they danced once more together without saying a word to each other, and when the dance was over, the young man again led her to the table, and said:

"Now I shall say good-by. But first you must get your breath, and then drink once more."

He handed her the glass, and when she set it down again, he said:

"You must drain it, for my sake, to the very bottom."

Amrei drank and drank; and when the glass was empty in her hand, she looked around — the stranger was gone! She went down and stood in front of the house; and there she saw him again, not far away, riding off on his white horse; but he did not look back.

The mist hung over the valley like a veil of clouds, and the sun had already set. Barefoot said to herself, almost aloud:

"I wish tomorrow would never come, but that it would always be today — always today!" And then she stood still, lost in dreams.

The night came on quickly. The moon, looking like a thin sickle, was resting on the summits of the dark mountains. One little Bernese wagon after another drove away. Barefoot went to find her master's chaise, to which the horses were now being hitched. Then Rose came and told her brother that she had promised some young people of her village to go home in company with them. And it was understood as a matter of course that the farmer could not drive home alone with the maid. And so the little Bernese wagon went rattling off toward home with a single occupant.

Rose must have seen Barefoot, but she acted as if she were not there. And so Barefoot once more wandered forth along the road on which the stranger had departed. Whither could he have gone? How many hundred villages and hamlets there were along that road, and to which one

was he bound? Barefoot found the place again where he had first accosted her in the morning; she repeated aloud to herself his salutation, and the answer she had given him. And once more she sat down behind the hazel hedge, where in the morning she had slept and dreamt. A yellow-hammer sat on a slender spray, and its six notes sounded just as if it were saying: "And why art thou still here? And why art thou still here?"

Barefoot had lived through a whole life's history in this one day. Could it be but a single day? She went back again to the dance, but did not go up to the room itself. And then she started out homeward alone. She had gone almost halfway to Haldenbrunn, when she suddenly turned back; she seemed unable to tear herself away from the place where she had been so happy. And she said to herself that it was not right for her to go home alone anyway; she should go in company with the young men and girls from her village. When she arrived in front of the tavern at Endringen again, she found several people from her village already assembled there.

"Ah, are you here, too, Barefoot?" was the only greeting she received.

And now there was great confusion; for many who had been the first to urge going home, were still upstairs dancing. And now some strange lads came and begged and besought them to stay for just one more dance; and they got their way. Barefoot, too, went upstairs, but only to look on. At last the cry was: "Whoever dances now shall be left behind;" and after a great deal of difficulty and much rushing to and fro, the Haldenbrunn contingent was finally assembled in front of the house. Some of the musicians escorted them through the village, and many a sleepy father came to the window to see what was going on, while now and then a woman, who had once been one of the merry-makers herself, but who had married and so culminated her days of frivolity, would appear at a window and cry: "A pleasant journey home!"

The night was dark, and large pine fagots had been provided for torches; and the lads who carried them danced about and shouted with joy. Scarcely had the musicians gone back, and scarcely had the party left Endringen well behind, when the cry was: "Put out the torches! They only dazzle us!" And two soldiers in particular, who were then off duty and had joined the party, made fun of the torches, in proud consciousness of their sabres. Accordingly the torches were extinguished in a ditch. And now they began to miss this or that boy, and this or that girl, and when their comrades called out to them, they would answer from a distance.

Barefoot walked behind the rest, a good distance from those of her own village. They let her alone, and that was the greatest kindness they could have done her; she was with the people of her own village, and yet she was alone. She often looked around at the fields and the woods; how wonderful it all looked in the night!—so strange and yet so familiar! The whole world seemed as strange to her as she had become to herself. And as she went along, step by step, as if she were being pulled or pushed, without realizing that she was moving, so did her thoughts move, involuntarily, in her mind; they seemed to be whirling on, and she could not grasp or control them—she did not know what it meant. Her cheeks glowed as if every star in the heavens were a heat-radiating sun, and her very heart burned within her.

And now, just as if she had begun it, as if she herself had struck up the tune, her companions ahead began to sing the song that had risen to her lips that morning:

"There were two lovers in Allgau,
Who loved each other so dear;

And the young lad went away to war;
When comest thou home again?

Ah, that I cannot, love, tell thee,
What year, or what day, or what hour!"

And then the "Good Night" song was sung; and Amrei, in the distance, joined in:

"A fair 'good night' to thee, love, farewell!
When all are sleeping
Then watch I'm keeping,
So wearily.

A fair "good night" to thee, love, farewell!
Now I must leave thee,
And joy be with thee,
Till I come back.

And when I come back, then I'll come to thee,
And then I'll kiss thee,
That tastes so sweetly,—
Love, thou art mine!

Love, thou art mine, and I am thine,
And that doth content me,
And shall not repent thee,
Love, fare thee well!"

At last they came to the village, where one group after another detached itself. Barefoot paused under the tree by her father's house, and stood there for a long time in dreamy meditation. She would have liked to go in and tell Black Marianne everything, but gave up the idea. Why should she disturb the old woman's rest at night? What good would it do? She went quietly home, where everybody was asleep. When she finally entered the house, everything seemed so much more strange to her than it had outside — so odd, so out of keeping, so out of place. "Why do you come home? What do you want here?" There seemed to be a strange questioning in every sound; when the dog barked, when the stairs creaked, when the cows lowed in the stable — they all seemed to be questioning her: "Who's that coming home? Who's that?" And when at length she found herself in her room, she sat down quietly and stared at the light. Suddenly she got up, seized the lamp, held it up to the glass, and looked at her face; she felt inclined to ask herself: "Who's that?"—"And thus," she thought, "he saw me — this is how I looked.

He must have been pleased with something about you, or else why did he look at you so?"

There arose in her a quiet feeling of contentment, which was heightened by the thought:

"Well, for once you have been looked upon as a person; until now you have been nothing but a servant, a convenience for others. Good night, Amrei — this has been a day indeed! But even this day must come to an end at last."

Chapter XI

WHAT THE OLD SONG SAYS

[The memory of the handsome stranger, and of the dance, and of all the new and wonderful emotions that had filled her heart on that eventful day, to Amrei was a sacred one indeed; for weeks she thought of it by day and dreamed of it by night. The jealous, sneering remarks of Rose, and the half-serious, half-jesting utterances of other people, who had been present at the wedding, meant nothing to her; she went about her work all the more diligently and ignored it all. Black Marianne could offer her no encouragement in her hope that the stranger would some day appear again and claim her; she had waited all her life for her John, and would continue to wait until she died.]

Spring had come again. Amrei was standing beside the flowers in her window when a bee came flying up and began sucking at an open blossom.

"Yes, so it is," thought Barefoot; "a girl is like a plant; she grows up in one place, and cannot go out into the world and seek — she must wait until something comes flying to her."

"Were I a little bird,
And had a pair of wings,
I'd fly to thee;
But since I can't do that,
Here must I be.

Though I am far from thee,
In dreams I am with thee,
Thou art mine own;
But when I wake again,
I am alone.

No hour at night doth pass,
But that my heart doth wake,
And think of thee,—"

Thus sang Amrei. It was wonderful how all songs seemed now to apply to her own life. And how many thousands of people have already sung those songs from the depths of their souls, and how many thousands more are yet to sing them!

Ye who yearn and who at last embrace a heart, ye embrace along with it the love of all those who ever have been, or who ever shall be.

Chapter XII

HE IS COME

One Sunday afternoon Barefoot, according to her custom, was leaning against the door-post of the house and gazing dreamily out before her, when Coaly Mathew's grandson came running up the street, beckoning to her from afar and crying:

"He is come, Barefoot! He is come!"

Barefoot felt her knees tremble, and she cried in a broken voice:

"Where is he? Where?"

"At my grandfather's, in Mossbrook Wood!"

"Where? Who? Who sent you?"

"Your Damie—he's down yonder in the woods."

Barefoot was obliged to sit down on the stone bench in front of the house; but only for a minute. Then she pulled herself together and stood up stiffly with the words:

"My brother? My Damie?"

"Yes, Barefoot's Damie," said the boy, bluntly; "and he promised that you would give me a kreutzer if I would run and tell you. So now give me a kreutzer."

"My Damie will give you three."

"Oh, no!" said the boy, "he's been whimpering to my grandfather because he hadn't a kreutzer left."

"I haven't one now either," said Barefoot, "but I'll promise you one."

She went quickly into the house and begged the second maid to milk the cows for her that evening, in case she should not get back, for she had an errand to do immediately. Then, with a heart now full of anger at Damie, now full of sorrow for him and his awkwardness, again full of vexation on account of his coming back, and then again full of self-reproach that she should be going to meet her only brother in such a way, Barefoot wended her way out into the fields and down the valley to Mossbrook Wood.

There was no mistaking the way to Coaly Mathew's, even if one were to wander off from the foot-path. The smell of burning charcoal led one to him infallibly.

How the birds are rejoicing in the trees! And beneath them a sad maiden is passing, thinking how unhappy it must make her brother to see all these things again, and how badly things must have gone with him, if he had no other resource but to come home and live upon her earnings.

"Other sisters are helped by their brothers," she thought to herself, "and I — but I shall show you this time, Damie, that you must stay where I put you, and that you dare not stir!"

Such were Barefoot's thoughts as she hurried along; and at last she arrived at Coaly Mathew's. But there she saw only Coaly Mathew himself, who was sitting by the kiln in front of his log cabin, and holding his wooden pipe with both hands as he smoked it; for a charcoal-burner is like a charcoal kiln, in that he is always smoking.

"Has anybody been playing a trick on me?" Barefoot asked herself. "Oh, that would be shameful! What have

I done to people that they should make a fool of me? But I shall soon find out who did it — and he shall pay for it."

With clenched fists and a flaming face she stood before Coaly Mathew, who hardly raised his eyes to her — much less did he speak. As long as the sun was shining he was almost always mute, and only at night, when nobody could look into his eyes, did he like to talk, and then he spoke freely.

Barefoot gazed for a minute at the charcoal-burner's black face, and then asked impatiently:

"Where is my Damie?"

The old man shook his head. Then Barefoot asked again with a stamp of her foot:

"Is my Damie with you?"

The old man unfolded his hands and spread them right and left, implying thereby that he was not there.

"Who was it that sent to me?" asked Barefoot, still more impatiently. "Can't you speak?"

The charcoal-burner pointed with his right thumb toward the side where a foot-path wound around the mountain.

"For Heaven's sake, do say something!" cried Barefoot, fairly weeping with indignation; "only a single word! Is my Damie here, or where is he?"

At last the old man said:

"He's there — gone to meet you along the path." And then, as if he had said too much, he pressed his lips together and walked off around the kiln.

Barefoot now stood there, laughing scornfully and, at the same time, sadly over her brother's simplicity.

"He sends to me and doesn't stay in the place where I can find him; now if I go up that way, why should he expect me to come by the foot-path? That has doubtless occurred to him now, and he'll be going some other way — so that I shall never find him, and we shall be wandering about each other as in a fog."

Barefoot sat down quietly on the stump of a tree. There was a fire within her as within the kiln, only the flames

could not leap forth — the fire could merely smolder within. The birds were singing, the forest rustling — but what is all that when there is no clear, responsive note in the heart? Barefoot now remembered, as in a dream, how she had once cherished thoughts of love. What right had she to let such thoughts rise within her? Had she not misery enough in herself and in her brother? And this thought of love seemed to her now like the remembrance, in winter, of a bright summer's day. One merely remembers how sunny and warm it was — but that is all. Now she had to learn what it meant to "wait," — to "wait" high up on a crag, where there is hardly a palm's breadth of room. And he who knows what it means, feels all his old misery — and more.

She went into the charcoal-burner's log cabin, and there lay a cloth sack, hardly half full, and on the sack was her father's name.

"Oh, how you have been dragged about!" she said, almost aloud. But she soon got over her excitement in her curiosity to see what Damie had brought back. "He must at least still have the shirts that I made for him out of Black Marianne's linen. And perhaps there is also a present from our uncle in America in it. But if he had anything good, would he have gone first to Coaly Mathew in the forest? Would he not have shown himself in the village at once?"

Barefoot had plenty of time to indulge in these reflections; for the sack had been tied with a cord, which had been knotted in a most complicated way, and it required all her patience and skill to disentangle it. She emptied out everything that was in the sack and said with angry eyes:

"Oh, you good-for-nothing! There's not a decent shirt left! Now you may have your choice whether you'll be called 'Jack in Tatters' or 'Tattered Jack.'"

This was not a happy frame of mind in which to greet her brother for the first time. And Damie seemed to realize this; for he stood at the entrance of the log cabin and looked

on, until Barefoot had put everything back into the sack. Then he stepped up to her and said:

"God greet you, Amrei! I bring you nothing but dirty clothes, but you are neat, and will make me—"

"Oh, dear Damie, how you look!" cried Barefoot, and she threw herself on his neck. But she quickly tore herself away from him, exclaiming:

"For Heaven's sake! You smell of whisky! Have you got so far already?"

"No, Coaly Mathew only gave me a little juniper spirit, for I could not stand up any longer. Things have gone badly with me, but I have not taken to drink—you may believe that, though, to be sure, I can't prove it."

"I believe you, for you surely would not wish to deceive the only one you have on earth! But oh, how wild and miserable you look! You have a beard as heavy as a knife-grinder's. I won't allow that—you must shave it off. But you're in good health? There's nothing the matter with you?"

"I am in good health, and intend to be a soldier."

"What you are, and what you are to be, we'll think about in good time. But now tell me how things have gone with you."

Damie kicked his foot against a half-burnt log of wood—one of the spoilt logs, as they were called—and said:

"Look you—I am just like that, not completely turned to coal, and yet no longer fresh wood."

Barefoot exhorted him to say what he had to say without complaints. And then Damie went off into a long, long story, setting forth how he had not been able to bear the life at his uncle's, and how hard-hearted and selfish that uncle was, and especially how his wife had grudged him every bit he ate in the house, and how he had got work here and there, but how in every place he had only experienced a little more of man's hard-heartedness. "In America," he said, "one can see another person perishing in misery, and never so much as look around at him."

Barefoot could hardly help laughing when there came again and again, as the burden of his story,—"And then they turned me out into the street." She could not help interrupting him with:

"Yes, that's just how you are, and how you used to be, even as a child. When you once stumbled, you let yourself fall like a log of wood; one must convert the stumble into a hop, as the old proverb says. Cheer up. Do you know what one must do, when people try to hurt one?"

"One must keep out of their way."

"No, one must hurt them, if one can—and one hurts them most by standing up and achieving something. But you always stand there and say to the world: 'Do what you like to me, good or bad; kiss me or beat me, just as you will.' That's easy enough; you let people do anything to you, and then pity yourself. I should like it right well myself, if some one would place me here and there, and do everything for me. But you must look out for yourself now. You've let yourself be pushed about quite enough in the world; now you must play the master for awhile."

Reproof and teaching often seem like hardness and injustice in the eyes of the unhappy; and Damie took his sister's words as such. It was dreadful that she did not see that he was the most unhappy creature on earth. She strongly urged him not to believe that, and said that if he did not believe it, it would not be so. But it is the most difficult of all undertakings to inspire a man with confidence in himself; most people acquire it only after they have succeeded.

Damie declared that he would not tell his heartless sister a word more; and it was only after some time that she got from him a detailed account of his travels and fortunes, and of how he had at last come back to the old world as a stoker on a steamboat. While she reproved him for his self-tormenting touchiness, she became conscious that she herself was not entirely free from that fault. For, as a result of her almost exclusive association with Black Marianne, she had fallen into the habit of thinking and talking

so much about herself, that she had acquired a desponding way. And now that she was called upon to cheer her brother up, she unconsciously exerted a similar influence upon herself. For herein lies the mysterious power of co-operation among men, that when we help others we are also helping ourselves.

"We have four sound hands," she said in conclusion, "and we'll see if we cannot fight our way through the world together. And to fight your way through is a thousand times better than to beg your way through. And now, Damie, come with me — come home."

Damie did not want to show himself in the village at all; he dreaded the jeering that would be vented upon him from all sides, and preferred to remain concealed for the present. But Barefoot said:

"You go with me now — on this bright Sunday; and you must walk right through the village, and let the people mock at you, let them have their say, let them point and laugh. Then you'll be through with it, then it will be over, and you will have swallowed their bitter draught all at once, and not drop by drop."

Not without long and obstinate resistance, not until Coaly Mathew had interfered and sided with Barefoot, was Damie induced to comply. And there was, indeed, a perfect hail-storm of jeering, sometimes coarse, sometimes satirical, directed at Barefoot's Damie, whom people accused of having taken merely a pleasure-trip to America at the expense of the parish.

Black Marianne alone received him kindly; her first question was:

"Have you heard nothing of my John?" But he could give her no information.

In a double sense Damie was doomed to be scratched that day; for that very evening Barefoot had the barber come and shave off his wild beard, and give him the smooth face that was the fashion of the country.

The next morning Damie was summoned to the Court-

house; and inasmuch as he trembled at the summons, he knew not why, Barefoot promised to accompany him. And that was good, though it was not of much use; for the Council declared to Damie that he was to be sent away from the place, that he had no right to remain there, perhaps to become a burden on the community once more.

All the members were astonished when Barefoot answered:

"Yes, you can send him away — but do you know when? When you can go out to the churchyard, where our father and mother lie buried, and say to them: 'Up, go away with your child!' Then you can send him away. No one can be sent away from the place where his parents are buried; for he is more than at home there. And if it is written a thousand times in your books there, and a thousand times again," — and here she pointed to the bound government registers, — "and wherever else it may be written, it cannot be done, and you cannot do it."

One of the councilors whispered to the schoolmaster:

"Barefoot has learned to talk in that way from nobody else but Black Marianne."

And the sexton leaned over to the magistrate and said:

"Why do you allow the Cinderella to make such an outcry? Ring for the gendarme and have him shut her up in the madhouse."

But the magistrate only smiled, and explained that the community had rid itself of all burdens that could ever accrue to it through Damie by paying the greater part of his passage money.

"But where is his home now?" asked Barefoot.

"Wherever they will receive him, but not here — at present nowhere."

"Yes, I have no home," said Damie, who almost enjoyed being made more and more unhappy; for now nobody could deny that he was the most unfortunate person in the world.

Barefoot continued to fight, but she soon saw that nothing could be done; the law was against her. She now declared that she would work her fingers to the bone rather than take

anything more from the parish, either for herself or for her brother; and she promised to pay back all that had been received.

"Shall I put that down on the minutes?" asked the clerk of those who sat around. And Barefoot replied:

"Yes, put it down; for with you nothing counts except what's written."

Barefoot then put her signature to the entry. When this was done, it was announced that Damie, as a stranger, had permission to remain in the village for three days, but that if within that time he had not found some means of subsistence, he would be sent away, and in case of necessity, would be removed by force across the frontier.

Without another word Barefoot left the Court-house with Damie, who actually shed tears because she had compelled him to return to the village to no purpose. It would have been better, he declared, if he had remained out in the woods and spared himself the jeering, and the humiliation of hearing himself banished as a stranger from his native place. Barefoot wanted to reply that it was better to know the worst, however bitter it might be; but she restrained herself, realizing that she had need of all her strength to keep up her own courage. She felt as if she had been banished with her brother, and understood that she had to fight with a world that had law and might to fall back upon, while she herself was empty-handed and helpless.

But she bore up more bravely than ever; she did not allow Damie's weaknesses and adversities to weigh upon her. For that is the way with people; if any one has a pain of his own which entirely occupies him, he will bear a second pain — be it ever so severe — more easily than if he had this second pain alone to bear. And thus while Barefoot had a feeling of indescribable sorrow against which she could do nothing, she was able to bear the definite trial against which she could strive, the more willingly and freely. She allowed herself not a minute more for dreaming, and went to and fro with stiff arms and clinched fists, as

if to say: "Where is there work to do? Be it ever so hard, I will gladly undertake it, if only I can get myself and my brother out of this state of forsaken dependency."

She now cherished the idea of going with Damie to Alsace, and working in a factory there. It seemed terrible to her that she should have to do this, but she would force herself to it; as soon as the summer was over, she would go. And then, "Farewell home," she said, "for we are strangers even here where we were born."

The one protector the two orphans had had on the Village Council was now powerless to do anything for them; old Farmer Rodel was taken seriously ill, and in the night following the stormy meeting he died. Barefoot and Black Marianne were the two people who wept the most at his burial in the churchyard. On the way home Black Marianne gave as a special reason for this fact that old Farmer Rodel had been the last survivor of those with whom she had danced in her youth. "And now," she said, "my last partner is dead."

But she soon spoke a very different elegy concerning him; for it appeared that Farmer Rodel, who had for years been raising Barefoot's hopes concerning his will, made no mention at all of her in that document—far less did he leave her anything.

When Black Marianne went on with an endless tirade of scolding and complaining, Barefoot said:

"It's all coming at once. The sky is cloudy now, and the hail is beating down upon me from all sides; but the sun will soon be shining again."

The relatives of Farmer Rodel gave Barefoot a few garments that had belonged to the old man; she would have liked to refuse them, but realized that it would not do to show a spirit of obstinacy just now. At first Damie also refused to accept the clothes, but he was finally obliged to give in; he seemed fated to pass his life in the clothes of various dead people.

Coaly Mathew took Damie to work with him at the kiln

in the forest, where talebearers kept coming to Damie to tell him that he had only to begin a lawsuit; they declared that he could not be driven away, for he had not yet been received at any other place, and that this was always a tacit condition when any one gave up his right of settlement. These people seemed to derive a certain satisfaction from the reflection that the poor orphans had neither time nor money to begin a legal process.

Damie seemed to like the solitude of the forest; it suited him exactly, the fact that one was not obliged to dress and undress there. And every Sunday afternoon Barefoot experienced great difficulty in getting him to clean himself up a little; then she would sit with him and Coaly Mathew.

Little was said, and Barefoot could not prevent her thoughts from wandering about the world in search of him who had once made her so happy for a whole day, and had lifted her above the earth. Did he know nothing more about her? Did he think of her no more? Could people forget other people with whom they had once been so happy?

It was on a Sunday morning toward the end of May, and everybody was at church. The day before it had rained, and now a strong, refreshing breeze was blowing over the mountains and valleys, and the sun was shining brightly. Barefoot had also intended to go to church, but while the bells were ringing she had sat as if spell-bound beneath her window, until it was too late to go. That was a strange thing for her, and it had never happened before. But now that it was too late, she determined to stay at home by herself and read her hymn-book. She rummaged through her drawers, and was surprised to find all sorts of things that belonged to her. She was sitting on the floor, reading a hymn and humming the tune of it to herself, when something stirred at the window. She glanced up; a white dove was sitting on the ledge and looking at her. When the eyes of the dove and of the girl met, the bird flew away. Barefoot watched it soar out over the fields and alight again.

This incident, which was a very natural one, filled her heart with gladness; and she kept nodding to the mountains in the distance, and to the fields and woods. The rest of that day she was unusually cheerful. She could not explain to herself why, but it seemed to her as if a joyous spirit were singing within her, and she knew not whence it came. And as often as she shook her head, while she leaned against the door-post, wondering at the strange excitement she felt, the feeling did not pass away.

"It must be, it must be that some one has been thinking kindly of me," she said; "and why should it not be possible that the dove was a silent messenger who came to tell me so? — Animals, after all, live in the world, where the thoughts of men are flying about, and who knows if they do not quietly carry those thoughts away?"

The people who passed by Barefoot could have no idea of the strange life that was moving within her.

Chapter XIII

Out of a Mother's Heart

While Barefoot was dreaming and working and worrying in village, field, and wood, sometimes feeling a strange thrill of joy, at other times thinking herself completely deserted, two parents were sending their child forth into the world, in the hope, to be sure, that he would return to them the richer. Yonder in Allgau, in the large farm-house known, by the sign over the door, as the "Wild Clearing," sat Farmer Landfried and his wife, with their youngest son. The farmer was saying:

"Listen, John; it's more than a year since you came back, and I don't know what's gotten into you. You came home that day like a whipped dog, and said that you would rather choose a wife here in the neighborhood — but I don't see any signs of your doing it. If you will follow my advice once more, then I won't say another word to persuade you."

"Yes, I will," said the young man, without looking up.

"Well then, make one more trial — one trial is no better than no trial. And I tell you, you will make me and your mother happy if you choose a wife from our region. I may say it to your face, wife; there's only one good breed of women in the world, and they come from our part of the country. Now, you are a sensible lad, John, and you will be sure to pick out a good one, and then you'll thank us on your death-bed for sending you to our home to find a wife. If I could get away, I would go with you — together we would find the right one surely — but I can't go. I've spoken to our George, however, and he says he'll go with you if you ask him. Ride over, and speak to him then."

"If I may say what I think," answered the young man, "when I go again, I'd rather go alone. You see, it's my way; in such a matter a second pair of eyes is superfluous — I should not like to consult any one else. If it were possible, I should even like to make myself invisible while I am looking around; but if two of us went together, we might as well have it proclaimed abroad, so that they would all dress themselves up to receive us."

"As you will," said the father; "you always were a strange fellow. Do you know what? Suppose you start at once; we want a mate for our white horse, so do you go out and look for one — but not in the market, of course. And when you are going about from house to house, you can see things for yourself; and on your way home you can buy a Bernese chaise-wagon. Dominic, in Endringen, they say, has three daughters as straight as organ-pipes; choose one of them — we should like to have a daughter from that house."

"Yes," the mother observed, "Ameile is sure to have nice daughters."

"And it would be well," continued the father, "if you went to Siebenhofen and took a look at Amrei, the Butter Count's daughter. She has a farm of her own that one could easily sell; the farmers of Siebenhofen have got their

eyes on it, for they want to have more land. But it's a question of cold cash, and none of them can raise it. But I'll say nothing more, for you have eyes of your own. Come, set out at once, and I'll fill the money-belt for you — two hundred crowns will be enough, but if you should have to have more, Dominic will lend you some. Only make yourself known; I could never understand why you did not tell people who you were that time at the wedding. Something must have happened then — but I won't ask any questions."

"Yes, because he won't answer them," said the mother, smiling.

The farmer at once set about filling the money-belt; he broke open two large paper rouleaux, and it was manifest that he enjoyed counting out the big coins from one hand into the other. He made twenty piles of ten dollars each, and counted them over two or three times to be sure that he had made no mistake.

"Well, I am ready," said the young man, standing up as he spoke.

He is the strange dancer whose acquaintance we made at the wedding in Endringen. He went out to the stable, and presently returned with the white horse already saddled. And as he was fastening his valise to the bolster, a fine, large wolf-hound began jumping up at him and licking his hands.

"Yes, yes, I'll take you with me," said the lad to the dog; and for the first time his face looked cheerful, as he called out to his father:

"Father, can I take Lux with me?"

"Yes, if you like," sounded the answer from within, amid the jingling of coins. The dog seemed to understand the question and the answer, for he ran around the yard in circles, barking joyously. The young man went into the house, and, as he was buckling on the money-belt, he said:

"You are right, father; I feel better already, now that I am getting myself out of this aimless way of living. And

I don't know — people ought not to be superstitious — but somehow I was glad when the horse turned around and neighed to me when I went out into the stable just now — and that the dog wants to go too. After all, they're good signs, and if we could ask animals, who knows if they could not give us good advice?"

The mother smiled, but the father said:

"Don't forget to look up Crappy Zachy, and don't go ahead and bind yourself until you have consulted him. He knows the affairs of all the people for ten miles around, and is a living information bureau. And now, God be with you! Take your time — you may stay away as long as ten days."

Father and son shook hands, and the mother said:

"I'll escort you part of the way."

The young man, leading his horse by the bridle, then walked quietly beside his mother until they were out in front of the yard, and it was not until they reached the turn in the road that the mother said, hesitatingly:

"I should like to give you some good advice."

"Yes, yes, let me have it — I'll listen to it gladly."

The mother then took her son's hand, and began:

"You must stand still — I can't talk while I am walking. Look; that she should please you is, of course, the first thing — there's no happiness without love. Well, I am an old woman, and so I may say what I think to you, may I not?"

"Yes, surely."

"Well, if it doesn't make you happy, if it doesn't make you feel as if it were a boon from heaven to kiss her, then it's not the right kind of love. But — why don't you stand still — but that kind of love is not enough; there may be something else concealed beneath it, believe me." Here the old woman blushed crimson and hesitated. "Look you," she went on, "where there is not the right feeling of respect, when a man does not feel rejoiced that a woman takes a thing in hand in just one way, and not in another,

and does it just in this way, and not in that—it's a bad sign. And above all things, notice how she treats her servants."

"I'll take what you have to say, and change it into small coin for you; for talking is hard for you. What you have just said, I understand; she must not be too proud, and not too familiar."

"That, certainly. But I can tell by looking at a girl's mouth, if that mouth has used bad words and scolded and stormed, and is fond of doing it. Yes, if you could see her weeping with vexation, or come upon her unawares, when she is angry, that would be the best way of knowing what she is. For then the inward self that we conceal springs out, and often that self is armed with claws, like a devil. Oh, child, I have had much experience, and have seen many things. I can tell by the way a woman puts out a candle what she is, and what kind of a temper she has; she who puts it out hurriedly as she goes by, regardless of whether it blows sparks or sputters or not, she is one who prides herself upon her bustling industry, and who does things only by halves, and has no peace of mind."

"But, mother, you're making it too hard for me; after all, it's a lottery, and always will be one."

"Yes, yes, you need not remember all I say—I mean it only in a general way. If it should come before you, you'll know what I meant. And then you must notice if she can talk and work at the same time, if she has something in her hand while she is talking to you, and if she stops every time she says a word and only pretends to be working. I tell you that industry is everything in a woman. My mother always used to say: 'A girl should never go about empty-handed, and should be ready to climb over three fences to pick up a feather.' And yet she must be calm and steady in her work, and not rush and rampage about as if she were going to pull down a piece of the world. And when she speaks and answers you, notice whether she is either too bashful or too bold. You may not believe it, but girls are

quite different when they see a man's hat from what they are among themselves. And those who look as if they were all the time saying, "Don't eat me!" are the worst — but, no — those who have such sharp tongues, and think that when anybody is in the room their tongues should never rest, those are worse still."

The lad laughed and said:

"Mother, you ought to go about the world preaching, and give lectures for girls only."

"Yes, I could do that," replied the mother, also laughing. "But I have brought out the last part first; you must, of course, notice how she behaves to her parents and to her brothers and sisters. You are a good son yourself — I need not tell you anything about that. You know the Fourth Commandment."

"Yes, mother, you may rest easy there — I look out for a special sign in regard to that; where they make a big fuss about love for parents, it means nothing. For filial love is best shown by deeds, and those who chatter very much about it, when the time comes for deeds, are tired and weary."

"Why, how wise you are!" cried the mother; and she laid her hand on her bosom and looked up at her son. "May I tell you something more?"

[Mother and son continue to discuss the qualifications of good wives for some time, until the son begins to show signs of impatience to be off.]

"Yes, yes," said the mother, "I talk too much, and you need not remember it all. It's only to remind you, if it should come before you. The gist of what I say is this: the chief thing is not what a woman has or inherits, but what she uses. And now, you know that I have always let you go your own way quietly; so then, open your heart to me, and tell me what it was that made you come back from the wedding at Endringen like a man bewitched, and why it is that you have never since then been the same lad that you were before. Tell me, and perhaps I can help you."

"Oh, mother, you cannot do that — but I will tell you. I saw some one there who would have been the right one, but she was the wrong one."

"For heaven's sake! You did not fall in love with a married woman?"

"No, but still she was the wrong one. Why should I make many words about it? She was a servant-girl."

The son drew a deep breath, and for some time both he and his mother were silent. At last the mother laid her hand on his shoulder, and said:

"Oh, you are good! And I thank God that He has made you so. You did well to put that out of your mind. Your father would never have consented to it, and you know what a father's blessing means."

"No, mother, I will not make myself out better than I am. I myself was annoyed that she was only a servant; I knew it would not do, and therefore I went away. But it is even harder than I expected to get her out of my mind — but now it's over, it must be over. I have promised myself not to make any inquiries about her, not to ask anybody where she is, or who she is, and, God willing, I shall bring you home a worthy farmer's daughter."

"Surely you acted fairly by the girl, and did not put any foolish notions into her head?"

"Mother, there's my hand — I have nothing to reproach myself for."

"I believe you," said the mother, and she pressed his hand repeatedly. "And now, good luck, and my blessing go with you!"

The son mounted his horse, and his mother looked after him. But suddenly she called out again:

"Stop — I must tell you something else. I have forgotten the most important of all."

The son turned his horse around, and when he got back to his mother, he said, smiling:

"But mother — this is the last, eh?"

"Yes, and the best test of all. Ask the girl about the poor people in her town, and then listen to what the poor people have to say about her. A farmer's daughter who has not taken some poor person by the hand to help her, cannot be a worthy girl — remember that. And now, God keep you, and ride forth bravely."

As he rode off the mother spoke a prayer to speed him on his way, and then returned to the farm.

"I ought to have told him to inquire about Josenhans's children, and to find out what has become of them," said the mother to herself. She felt strangely moved. And who knows the secret ways through which the soul wanders, or what currents flow above our wonted course, or deep beneath it? What made the mother think of these children, who seemed to have faded from her memory long ago? Was her present pious mood like a remembrance of long-forgotten emotions? And did it awaken the circumstances that had accompanied those emotions? Who can understand the impalpable and invisible elements that wander and float back and forth from man to man, from memory to memory?

When the mother got back to the farm and found the father, the latter said:

"No doubt you have given him many directions how to fish out the best one; but I, too, have been making some arrangements. I have written to Crappy Zachy — he is sure to lead him to the best houses. He must bring a girl home who has plenty of good coin."

"Plenty of coin doesn't constitute goodness," replied the mother.

"I know that!" cried the farmer, with a sneer. "But why shouldn't he bring home one who is good and has plenty of coin into the bargain?"

The mother sat silent for a time, but after awhile she said:

"You've referred him to Crappy Zachy. It was at Crappy Zachy's that Josenhans's boy was boarded out."

Thus her pronouncing the name aloud showed that her former remembrances were dawning upon her; and now she became conscious what those remembrances were. And her mind often reverted to them during the events that were soon to occur, and which we are about to relate.

"I don't know what you're talking about," said the farmer. "What's the child to you? Why don't you say that I did the thing wisely?"

"Yes, yes, it was wisely done," the wife acquiesced. But the tardy praise did not satisfy the old man, and he went out grumbling.

A certain apprehension that things might go wrong with his boy after all, and that perhaps he had been in too great a hurry, made the farmer gruff, for the present, toward everybody about him.

Chapter XIV

THE RIDER ON THE WHITE HORSE

On the evening of the same day that John had ridden away from Zumarshofen, Crappy Zachy came to Farmer Rodel's house and sat with the proprietor in the back room for a long time, reading a letter to him in a low voice.

"You must give me a hundred crowns if I put this business through, and I want that down in writing," said Crappy Zachy.

"I should think that fifty would be enough, and even that is a pretty bit of money."

"No, not a red farthing less than a round hundred, and in saying that I am making you a present of a hundred. But I am willing to do that much for you and your sister—in fact, I am always glad to do a kindness to a fellow-townsman. Why, in Endringen or in Siebenhofen they would gladly give me double the money. Your Rose is a very respectable girl—nobody can deny that—but she's nothing extraordinary, and one might ask, what's the price of a dozen such?"

"Be quiet! I won't have that!"

"Yes, yes, I'll be quiet, and not disturb you while you're writing. Now, write at once."

Farmer Rodel was obliged to do as Crappy Zachy wished, and when he had done writing, he said:

"What do you think? Shall I tell Rose about it?"

"Certainly, you must do so. But don't let her show that she knows about it, nor tell any one in the place; it won't bear being talked about. All people have their enemies, you and your sister like the rest, you may believe me. Tell Rose to wear her everyday clothes and milk the cows when he comes. I shall have him come to your house alone. You read what Farmer Landfried writes; the boy has a will of his own, and would run away directly, if he suspected that there was anything being prepared for him. And you must send this very evening to Lauterbach and have your brother-in-law's white horse brought over here; then I'll get somebody to send the suitor over to you in quest of the horse. Don't let him notice that you know anything about it either."

Crappy Zachy went away, and Farmer Rodel called his sister and his wife into the little back room. After exacting a promise of secrecy, he imparted to them that a suitor for Rose was coming the next day, a prince of a man, who had a first-rate farm — in fact, it was none other than John, the son of Farmer Landfried of Zumarshofen. He then gave the further directions which Crappy Zachy had recommended, and enjoined the strictest secrecy.

After supper, however, Rose could not refrain from asking Barefoot, if, in case of her marrying, she would not go with her as her maid; she would give her double wages, and at the same time she would then not have to cross the Rhine and work in a factory. Barefoot gave an evasive answer; for she was not inclined to go with Rose, knowing that the latter had selfish motives for making the proposal. In the first place she wanted to boast of the fact that she

was going to get a husband, and, indeed, a first-rate one; and in the second place she was anxious to get Barefoot to manage her household affairs, about which she had until then scarcely bothered herself at all. Now Barefoot would have been very glad to do this for a mistress who was kind to her, but not for Rose. And besides, if she were to leave her present mistress, she did not intend to be a servant again anyway, but would work for herself, even if it were in a factory with her brother.

Barefoot was just going to bed, when her mistress called her and intrusted the secret to her, adding:

"You have always had patience with Rose, and now while her suitor is here, have double patience, in order that there may be no disturbance in the house."

"Yes, but I consider it wrong that she wants to milk the cows just this once; that's deceiving the worthy man, for she can't milk at all."

"You and I cannot alter the world," said the mistress. "I think it's hard enough for you to bear your own lot—let others do what they will."

Barefoot lay down, mournfully reflecting how people cheat one another without the least scruple. She did not know who the suitor was who was going to be deceived, but she was inwardly sorry for the poor young man. And she was doubly bewildered when she thought: "Who knows, perhaps Rose will be just as much deceived in him as he in her?"

Quite early in the morning, when Barefoot was looking out of her window, she suddenly started back as if a bullet had struck her forehead.

"Heavens! What is this?" She passed her hands over her eyes hastily, then opened them wide, and asked herself as if in a dream: "Why, it's the stranger of the wedding at Endringen! He has come to the village! He has come to fetch you! No, he knows nothing of you! But he shall know!—but no, what are you saying!"

He comes nearer and nearer, but does not look up. A full-

blossomed carnation falls from Barefoot's hand, but lands on the valise behind him; he does not see it, and it lies there in the road. Barefoot hurries down and recovers the treacherous token. And now the truth comes over her like the dawning of a terrible day. This is the suitor for Rose — this is he of whom she spoke last evening. And is this man to be deceived?

In the barn, kneeling on the clover which she was going to feed the cows, Barefoot fervently prayed to Heaven to preserve the stranger from ever marrying Rose. That he should ever be her own, was a thought she dared not entertain — and yet she could not bear to banish it.

As soon as she had finished milking, she hurried across to Black Marianne; she wanted to ask her what she should do. But Black Marianne was lying grievously ill; furthermore she had grown very deaf, and could hardly understand connected words. Barefoot did not dare to shout the secret that she had half confided to her and that the old woman had half guessed, loudly enough for Marianne to understand it, for people in the street might hear her. And so she came back, not knowing what to do.

Barefoot had to go out into the fields and stay there the whole day planting turnips. At every step she hesitated and thought of going home and telling the stranger everything; but the consciousness of her subordinate position in the house, as well as a special consideration, kept her to the duty that she had been called upon to perform.

"If he is foolish and inconsiderate enough," she soliloquized, "to rush into this affair without a thought, then there's no helping him, and he deserves no help. And —" she was fain to console herself at last — "and besides, engaged is not married anyway."

But all day long she was restless and unhappy. In the evening when she had returned from the fields and was milking the cows, and Rose was sitting with a full pail beside a cow that had been milked, she heard the stranger talking with Farmer Rodel in the nearby stable. They

were bargaining about a white horse. But how came the white horse in the stable? — until then they had had none.

"Who is that singing yonder?" the stranger now asked.

"That's my sister," answered the farmer. And at the word Barefoot joined in and sang the second voice, powerfully and defiantly, as if she wanted to compel him to ask who *that* was over yonder. But her singing had the disadvantage that it prevented her from hearing whether or not he did ask. And as Rose went across the yard with her pail, where the white horse had just been led out for inspection, the farmer said:

"There, that's my sister. Rose, leave your work, and get something ready for supper. We have a relative for a guest — I'll bring him in presently."

"And it was the little one yonder, who sang the second voice?" inquired the stranger. "Is she a sister of yours, too?"

"No — she, in a way, is an adopted child. My father was her guardian." The farmer knew very well that charity of this kind conduced to the credit of a house, and he therefore avoided saying outright that Barefoot was a maid.

Barefoot felt inwardly glad that the stranger knew something about her. "If he is wise," she reflected, "he will be sure to ask me about Rose. Then an opportunity will come for me to save him from a misfortune."

Rose brought in the supper, and the stranger was quite surprised to find that such good fare could be made ready so quickly — he did not know that it had all been prepared beforehand. Rose apologized by asking him to make shift with their plain fare, though he was doubtless accustomed to better things at home. She reckoned, not without acuteness, that the mention of a well-deserved fame would be gratifying to any one.

Barefoot was told to remain in the kitchen that day, and to give all the dishes into Rose's hands. She entreated over and over again: "For goodness sake, tell me who he is!

What's his name?"—but Rose gave her no answer. The mistress, however, at last solved the mystery by saying:

"You can tell her now—it's John, the son of Farmer Landfried of Zumarshofen. Amrei, you've a keepsake from her, haven't you?"

"Yes, yes," replied Barefoot; and she was obliged to sit down by the hearth, for her knees trembled under her. How wonderful all this was! And so he was the son of her first benefactress! "Now he must be told! If the whole village stones me for it, I shan't bear it!" she said to herself.

The stranger started to go, and his hosts escorted him to the door; but on the steps he turned about and said:

"My pipe has gone out—and I like best to light it for myself with a coal."

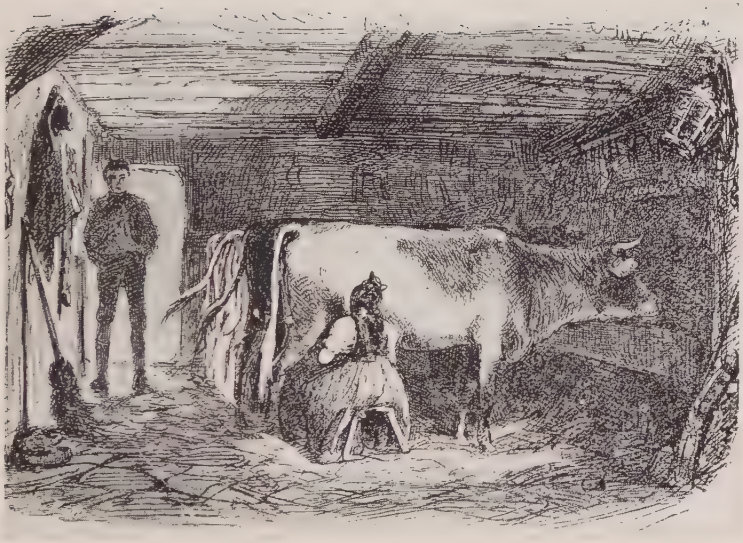
He evidently wanted to see how things looked in the kitchen. Rose pushed in ahead of him and handed him a coal with the tongs, standing, as she did so, directly in front of Barefoot, who was still sitting on the hearth by the chimney.

[Late that night Barefoot went out to find somebody whom she could get to warn the stranger not to marry Rose. She knew of nobody to whom she dared intrust so delicate a commission; she thought of Damie, but remembered that he was not allowed to enter the village. Finally, wet and chilled, as a result of wandering about through the fields barefoot, she returned home and went to bed.]

Chapter XV

BANISHED AND RELEASED

The following morning, when Barefoot awoke, she found the necklace that she had once received from Dame Landfried lying on her bed, and she had to think for some time before she remembered that she herself had taken it out the night before, and had looked at it a long, long time.



BENJAMIN VAUTIER

WHILE SHE WAS MILKING JOHN ASKED HER ALL KINDS OF QUESTIONS

When she started to get up, all her limbs felt numb; and clasping her hands with difficulty, she moaned:

"For Heaven's sake let me not be ill now! I have no time for it — I mustn't be ill now" — as if in anger at her bodily weakness.

Determined to overcome it by force, she got up; but how she started back when she looked at herself in the glass! Her whole face was swollen! "That's your punishment," she said, half-aloud, "for running about so last night, and wanting to call upon strangers, even bad people, to help you!" She beat her disfigured face as if to chastise herself, and then tied a cloth around it tightly and went about her work.

When the mistress saw her, she wanted to put her to bed again at once. Rose, on the other hand, scolded, and declared that it was a bit of spite on Barefoot's part, this being ill just now — she had done it out of meanness, knowing that she would be wanted. Barefoot made no reply.

When she was out in the cow-shed, putting clover into the mangers, she heard a clear voice say:

"Good morning! At work so early?"

It was *his* voice.

"Not very hard," replied Barefoot; and she ground her teeth with vexation, more on account of the tormenting demon who had disfigured her face, so that it was impossible that he should recognize her, than anything else.

Should she make herself known now? — it was better to wait and see.

While she was milking, John asked her all sorts of questions; first he inquired about the quantity of milk the cows yielded, and whether any of it was sold, and how; then he wanted to know who made the butter, and if anybody in the house kept an account of it.

Barefoot trembled. It was now in her power to put her rival out of the way by declaring what kind of a person she was! But how strangely involved and tangled are the strings of action! She was ashamed of the idea of speaking evil of her master's family, though, in truth, she would

have spoken so only of Rose, for the others were good. But she was aware that it was shameful for a servant to betray the faults of the inner management of the house. She therefore secured herself from this by saying to herself:

"It does not become a servant to judge his master. And they are all good-hearted," she added, prompted by her strong sense of justice. For, in truth, Rose, too, was good-hearted, in spite of her hot temper and domineering spirit.

And now a good idea occurred to her; if she were to tell the truth about Rose now, he would go away directly and would certainly escape from Rose — but then he would be gone. Therefore, with wonderful good sense, she said:

"You seem to be a prudent man, and your parents have a name for prudence, too. Now, you know that in one day one cannot get to know even a horse properly, and so I think you ought to stay here a little while. Later on we two will get to know each other better, and one word will bring on another, and if I can be of service to you, I will not fail you. I don't know, however, why you question me like this — ?"

"You are a little rogue — but I like you," said John.

Barefoot started so that the cow winced and almost overturned the milk-pail.

"And you shall have a good present, too," added John; and he let a dollar that he already had in his hand, slip back into his pocket.

"I'll tell you something more," Barefoot resumed, moving on to another cow; "the sexton is an enemy of my master's — I want you to know that in case he tries to get hold of you."

"Yes, yes, it's evidently worth while to talk with you. But I notice that you have a swollen face; there's no point in your tying your head up, if you continue to go about barefoot like that."

"I am used to it," replied Barefoot, "but I will follow your advice. Thank you."

Footsteps were heard approaching.

"We will talk together again," said the young man, and then he went away.

"I thank you, swollen cheek," said Barefoot to herself, stroking her disfigured face; "you have done me a good turn. Through you I can talk to him as if I were not here; I can speak behind a mask, like a clown on Shrove Tuesday. Hurrah!—that is merry!"

It was wonderful how this inward cheerfulness almost counteracted her bodily fever. She felt merely tired—indescribably tired; and she was half-pleased and half-sorry when she saw the foreman greasing the wheels of the Bernese chaise-wagon, and heard that her master was going to ride out with the stranger immediately. She hurried into the kitchen, and there she overheard the farmer saying to John in the parlor:

"If you care to take a ride, John, that would be fine. Then, Rose, you can sit with me in the Bernese chaise, and you, John, can ride alongside of us."

"But your wife is going too, isn't she?" inquired John, after a pause.

"I have a child to nurse, and cannot go away," said the farmer's wife.

"And I don't like to be driving about the country on a working-day," said Rose.

"Oh nonsense! When a cousin comes, you may take a holiday," urged the farmer; for he wanted Rose to go with him at once to Farmer Furche's, that the latter might entertain no hopes for his own daughter. Moreover he was aware that a little excursion of this kind does more to bring people together than a week's visit in the house.

John was silent; and the farmer in his urgency nudged him, and said in a half-whisper:

"Do you speak to her; maybe she will be more apt to do as you say, and will go with us."

"I think," said John aloud, "that your sister is quite right in preferring not to be driving about the country in

the middle of the week. I'll harness my white horse with yours, and then we can see how they pull together. And we shall be back by supper-time, if not before."

Barefoot, who heard all this, bit her lips to keep from laughing.

"You see," she thought to herself, "you have not even got him by the halter yet, much less by the bridle. He won't let himself be driven about the country like a betrothed man, and then not be able to get back."

She felt so warm with joy, that she was obliged to take the handkerchief from her face.

It was a strange day in the house. Rose repeated half-angrily the peculiar questions that John had asked her. Barefoot rejoiced inwardly; for all that he wanted to know — and she knew well why he wanted to know it — could have been satisfactorily answered by her.

"But what good does it all do?" she asked herself. "He does not know you, and even if he did know you, you are a poor orphan and a servant, and nothing could ever come of it. He does not know you, and will not ask about you."

In the evening, when the two men came back, Barefoot had already been able to remove the handkerchief from her forehead; but the one she had tied over her temples and under her chin, she was obliged to keep on still, drawn tightly around her face. John himself seemed to have neither tongue nor eyes for her. But his dog was with her in the kitchen all the time, and she fed the creature and stroked it and talked to it.

"Yes, if you could only tell him everything, you would be sure to tell him the whole truth." The dog laid its head on Barefoot's lap, and looked up at her with intelligent eyes; then he seemed to shake his head, as if to say: "It is too bad, but unfortunately I cannot speak."

Barefoot now went into the bed-room and began singing to the children again, although they had long been asleep; she sang various songs, but most of all the waltz to which

she had danced with John. John listened to her as if bewildered, and seemed to be absent-minded when he spoke. Rose went into the room, and told Barefoot to be quiet.

Late at night, when Barefoot had just drawn some water for Black Marianne and was returning to her parents' house with the full pail on her head, John met her as he was going to the tavern. With a suppressed voice she bade him a "Good evening."

"Oh, it is you!" said John. "Where are you going with that water at this time?"

"To Black Marianne."

"Who is that?"

"A poor woman, who is sick in bed."

"Why, Rose told me that there were no poor people here."

"Good heavens! there are more than enough. But Rose no doubt said that, because she thought it would be a disgrace to the village. She's good-hearted, you may believe me — and she's fond of giving things away."

"You are a loyal friend. But you mustn't stand there with that heavy pail. May I go with you?"

"Why not?"

"You are right; you are doing a kind deed, and nothing can harm you. And you need not be afraid of me."

"I am not afraid of anybody, and of you least of all. I saw today that you are kind."

"When did you see that?"

"When you advised me how to cure my swollen face. Your advice was good — you see, I have my shoes on now."

"That's a good thing that you are obedient," said John with an approving glance; and the dog, too, seemed to notice his approval of Barefoot, for he jumped up at her and licked her free hand.

"Come here, Lux!" cried John.

"No, let him alone," said Barefoot. "We are already good friends — he has been in the kitchen with me all day long. All dogs are fond of me and of my brother."

"So you have a brother?"

"Yes, and I wanted to appeal to you very earnestly to take him as a servant on your farm. You would be doing a very charitable deed, and he would be sure to serve you faithfully all his life."

"Where is your brother?"

"Down yonder in the woods; just now he is a charcoal-burner."

"Why, we have few trees and no kiln at all. I could more easily find work for a field-laborer."

"He'd be able to do that work, too. But here is the house."

"I'll wait until you come out," said John. Barefoot went in to put down the water, and arrange the fire, and make Marianne comfortable in bed.

When she came out John was still standing there and the dog jumped up at her. For a long time they stood under the parental tree, which rustled quietly and bowed its branches. They talked of all kinds of things; John praised her cleverness and her quick mind, and at last said:

"If you should ever want to change your place, you would be the very person for my mother."

"That is the greatest praise that anybody in the world could give me!" Barefoot declared. "I still have a keepsake from your mother." And then she related the incident of their meeting his mother, and both laughed when Barefoot told how Damie could not forget that Dame Landfried owed him a pair of leather-breeches.

"And he shall have them," John declared.

They then walked back together as far as the village, and John gave her his hand when he bade her "Good night." Barefoot wanted to tell him that he had shaken hands with her once before, but, as if frightened by the thought, she fled away from him and ran into the house; she did not even return his "Good night." John, puzzled and thoughtful, returned to his room at the "Heathcock."

The next morning Barefoot found that the swelling in

her face had vanished as if by magic. And never had she caroled more gaily through the house and yard, through the stable and barn, than she did today. And yet today was the day when it was to be decided, the day that John was to declare himself. Farmer Rodel did not want to have his sister talked about by any one, in case it should all come to nothing after all.

Nearly the whole day John sat in the room with Rose, who was making a man's shirt. Toward evening Mistress Rodel's parents came, along with other relatives. It must be decided one way or the other today.

The roast was sputtering in the kitchen, the pine wood cracking and snapping, and Barefoot's cheeks were glowing, heated by the fire on the hearth and the fire that was burning within her. Crappy Zachy walked back and forth and up and down with an air of great importance, and made himself very much at home — he even smoked Farmer Rodel's pipe.

"Then it is settled after all," said Barefoot to herself, mournfully.

Night had come. Many lights were burning in the house, and Rose, in festive attire, was hurrying back and forth between the room and the kitchen, though she did not know how to give any help. Everything was ready.

And now the young farmer's wife said to Barefoot:

"Go upstairs and put on your Sunday dress."

"Why?"

"You must wait on the table today, and you'll get a better present."

"I would rather stay in the kitchen."

"No, do as I tell you — and make haste."

Amrei went up to her room and sat down for a moment on her box in order to get her breath. She was dead tired. If she could only go to sleep now and never wake up again! But duty called. Hardly had she taken the first piece of her Sunday dress in her hand, when a feeling of joy came over her; and the evening sun, sending a red beam into the little attic, shone upon a pair of glowing cheeks.

"Put on your Sunday dress!" She had but one Sunday dress, and that was the one she had worn that day at the wedding in Endringen. Every flutter, every rustle of the dress reminded her of the happiness she had experienced, and of the waltz she had danced on that eventful day. But as darkness followed the setting of the sun, so did sorrow follow gladness; and she said to herself that she was thus adorning herself only to do honor to John, and to show how much she valued whatever came from his family, she at last put on the necklace.

Thus, adorned as she had been on the day of the wedding at Endringen, Amrei came down from her room.

"What is this? What did you dress yourself up like that for?" cried Rose angrily. She was already anxious and impatient because the visitor was so long in making his appearance. "Why do you put all your possessions on? Is that a fit necklace for a servant, with a coin hanging to it? You take that off directly!"

"No, I shall not do that; for his mother gave it to me when I was a little child, and I had it on when we danced together at Endringen."

Something was heard to fall on the staircase; but nobody heeded it, for Rose screamed out:

"What! You good-for-nothing, horrible witch! You would have perished in rags if we had not taken you up! And now you want to take my betrothed from me!"

"Don't call him that until he is your betrothed," replied Amrei, with a strange mixture of feelings in her voice.

"Wait!" I'll show you what you've got to do!" shrieked Rose. "Take that!" and she dragged Barefoot down to the ground and struck her in the face.

"I'll take my things off! Let me go!" screamed Barefoot.

But Rose let go before she had finished saying it; for, as if he had risen out of the ground, John was standing before her! He was as pale as death, and his lips were quivering. He could not speak, but merely raised his hand to protect Barefoot, who was still kneeling on the floor.

Barefoot was the first to speak; she cried out:

"Believe me, John, I have never seen her like that before, never in my whole life! And it was my fault."

"Yes, it was your fault. And, now, come; you shall go with me and be mine. Will you? I have found you, and I did not seek you. But now you shall live with me and be my wife. It is God's will."

If any one could have seen Barefoot's eyes then! But no mortal eye has ever fully seen a flash of lightning in the heavens, for no matter how firmly we look, our eyes are sure to be dazzled. And there are also flashes in the human eye which are never fully seen, just as there are workings in the human heart which are never fully understood. A momentary flash of joy, such as may brighten the face when the heavens are opened, darted from Amrei's eyes. She covered her face with both hands, and the tears ran forth from between her fingers.

John stood with his hand upon her. All the relatives had gathered around, and were gazing with astonishment at the strange scene.

"What's all this with Barefoot? What's all this?" blustered Farmer Rodel.

"So, your name is Barefoot?" cried John. He laughed loud and heartily, and added: "Come, now, will you have me? Say so now, for here we have witnesses to confirm it. Say 'Yes,' and nothing but death shall part us!"

"Yes!—and nothing but death shall part us!" cried Barefoot, throwing herself on his neck.

"Very well—then take her out of this house at once!" roared Farmer Rodel, foaming with rage.

"Yes, you need not tell me to do that. I thank you for your good reception, cousin. When you come to us some day, we'll make it quits," replied John. He put both hands up to his head, and cried: "Good heavens! Mother, mother, how glad you will be!"

"Go up, Barefoot, and take your box away at once; for

nothing belonging to you shall remain in my house!" commanded Farmer Rodel.

"Very well," replied John; "but that can be done with less noise. Come, Barefoot, I'll go with you. But tell me what your real name is."

"Amrei."

"I was once to have married an Amrei — she is the 'Butter Countess!' — you are my Salt Countess! Hurrah! Now come; I should like to see your room, where you have lived so long. Now you shall have a large house!"

The dog, with the hairs on his back standing up like bristles, kept walking around Farmer Rodel; he saw that the latter would have been glad to choke John. Only when John and Barefoot were at the top of the stairs did the dog come running after them.

John let the box stand, because he could not take it on his horse. But they packed Barefoot's possessions into the sack which she had inherited from her father.

As they were descending the stairs together on their way out, Barefoot felt somebody quietly press her hand in the dark — it was her mistress who was thus taking leave of her. At the threshold, with her hand upon the door-post against which she had so often leaned, she said sadly:

"May God reward this house for all good, and forgive it for all evil!"

They had gone but a few paces when Barefoot called out:

"Good heavens! I have forgotten all my shoes! They are upstairs on the shelf!"

Scarcely had she spoken the words, when the shoes, as if they were running after their owner, came flying out of the window and down into the street.

"Run to the devil in them!" cried a voice from the garret window. The voice sounded masculine, and yet it belonged to Rose.

Barefoot collected the shoes and took them to the tavern with John, who carried the sack on his back.

The moon was shining brightly, and the whole village was already asleep. Barefoot would not stay at the tavern.

"Then I should like to go home this very night," said John.

"Before I do anything else," replied Barefoot, "I must go to Black Marianne. She has filled a mother's place for me, and I have not seen her today, and have not been able to do anything for her. And besides that, she's ill. Alas! It is too bad that I shall have to leave her; but what am I to do? Come, go with me to her."

They went together to the house. When Barefoot opened the inside door a moonbeam fell upon the angel on the stove, just as a sunbeam had fallen on that day of long ago. And it seemed to smile and dance more merrily.

Barefoot cried with a loud voice:

"Marianne! Marianne! Wake up, Marianne! Happiness and blessing are here! Wake up!"

The old woman sat up in bed; the moonlight fell upon her face and neck. She opened her eyes wide and said:

"What is it? What is it? Who calls?"

"Rejoice! Here I bring you my John!"

"My John!" screamed the old woman, "Good God, my John! How long — how long — I have thee — I have thee! Oh God, I thank thee a thousand and a thousand times! Oh, my child, my boy! I see thee with a thousand eyes, and a thousandfold — No, there — there — thy hand! Come here — there — there in the chest is thy dowry! Take the cloth! My son! my boy! Yes, yes, she is thine! John, my son, my son! my — "

The old woman laughed convulsively, and fell back in her bed. Amrei and John had knelt down beside her, and when they stood up and bent over her, she had ceased to breathe.

"Oh, heavens! She is dead! Joy killed her!" exclaimed Barefoot. "She took you for her son. She died happy. Oh, why is it thus in the world, why is it thus?" She sank down by the bed again, and sobbed bitterly.

At last John raised her up, and Barefoot closed the dead woman's eyes. For a long time they stood together beside the bed; then Barefoot said:

"Come, I will wake up people who will watch by her body. God has been very gracious; she would have no one to care for her when I was gone. And God has given her the greatest joy in the last moment of her life. How long, oh, how long, she waited for that joy!"

"Yes, but you cannot stay here now," said John. "You must go with me this very night."

Barefoot woke up the gravedigger's wife, and sent her to Black Marianne. Her mind was so wonderfully composed that she remembered to tell the woman that the flowers, which stood on her window-ledge at the farm, were to be planted on Black Marianne's grave; and especially that she was not to forget to put Black Marianne's hymn-book under her head, as she had always wished.

When at last she had arranged everything, she stood up erect and, stretching out her arms, said:

"Now everything is done. You must forgive me, good man, that I was obliged to bring you to a house of sorrow; and forgive me, too, if I am not now as I should wish to be. I see now that all is well, and that God has ordered it for the best. But still I shake with fear in every limb — it is a hard thing to die. You cannot imagine how I have almost puzzled my brains out about it. But now all is well, and I will be cheerful — for I am the happiest girl in the world!"

"Yes, you are right.— But come, let us go. Will you ride with me on my horse?" asked John.

"Yes. Is it the white horse that you had at the wedding at Endringen?"

"To be sure!"

"And, oh, that Farmer Rodel! If he didn't send to Lauterbach the night before you came and have a white horse brought from there, so as to get you to come to his house. Holloa! white horse, go home again!" she concluded, almost merrily.

And thus their thoughts and feelings returned to ordinary life, and from it they learned to appreciate their happiness anew.

Chapter XVI

SILVERSTEP

[The two lovers mount the white horse, which Amrei suggests they call "Silverstep," and start out through the moonlight for John's home. As they ride along they talk and sing and tell stories and enjoy themselves as only lovers can. At Amrei's request, they stop on the way to see Damie, who is with Coaly Mathew in the forest; Amrei tells him all that has happened, and John promises to make him an independent herdsman, and gives him a silver-mounted pipe. Damie, inwardly rejoiced, but, as usual, not over-appreciative, reminds him of the "pair of leather breeches," a debt which John also promises to pay. Damie then displays unexpected cleverness by performing a mock-ceremony, in which he compels John to ask him, as his sister's only living relative, for Amrei's hand. Damie surprises his sister by doing this with considerable histrionic success, so that the two lovers start out again more merry than ever.]

Chapter XVII

OVER HILL AND VALE

The day had dawned when the two lovers reached the town; and already long before, when they encountered the first early-riser, they had alighted. They felt that they must have a strange appearance, and regarded this first person they met as a herald who had come to remind them of the fact that they must adapt themselves to the order of human conventionalities. So they dismounted, and John led the horse with one hand and held Amrei with the other. Thus they went on in silence, and as often as they looked at each other, their faces shone like those of children newly waked from sleep; but as often as they looked down, they became thoughtful and anxious about the immediate future.

Amrei, as if she had already been discussing the subject

with John, and in complete confidence that his mind must have been dwelling on the same thoughts, now said:

"To be sure, it would have been more sensible if we had done the thing in a more normal way. You should have gone home first, and meanwhile I should have stayed somewhere — at Coaly Mathew's in the forest, if we could have done no better. Then you could have come with your mother to fetch me, or could have written to me, and I could have come to you with my Damie. But do you know what I think?"

"Not everything you think."

"I think that regret is the most stupid feeling one can possibly cherish. Do what you will, you cannot make yesterday into today. What we did, in the midst of our rejoicing, that was right, and must remain right. Now that our minds have been become more sober again, we can't waste any time reproving ourselves. What we have to think of now is, how shall we do everything right in the future? But you are such a right-minded man that you will know what is right. And you can tell me everything you think, only tell me honestly; if you say what you mean, you won't hurt me, but if you keep anything back from me, you will hurt me. But you don't regret it, do you?

"Can you answer a riddle?" asked John.

"Yes, as a child I used to be able to do that well."

"Then tell me what this is — it is a simple, plain word: Take away the first letter, and you're ready to tear your hair out; put it back again, and all is firm and sure?"

"That's easy," said Barefoot, "easy as anything; it's Truth and Ruth."

At the first inn by the gate they stopped off; and Amrei, when she and John were alone in the room, and the latter had ordered some good coffee, said:

"How splendidly the world is arranged! These people have provided a house, and tables, and benches, and chairs, and a kitchen, in which the fire is burning, and they have coffee, and milk and sugar, and fine dishes, and it is all

ready for us as if we had ordered it. And when we go farther on we find more people and more houses, with all we want in them. It's like it is in the fairy-tale, 'Table, be covered!'"

"But you have to have the 'Loaf, come out of the bag!' too," said John, and he reached into his pocket and drew forth a handful of money. "Without that you'll get nothing."

"Yes, to be sure," said Amrei; "whoever has those wheels can roll through the world. But tell me, John — did coffee ever taste to you in your whole life like this? And the fresh white bread! Only you have ordered too much; we cannot manage all this. The bread I shall take with me, but it's a pity about the good coffee. How many poor people could be refreshed by it, and we must let it go to waste. And yet you have to pay for it just the same."

"That's no matter; one cannot figure so accurately in the world."

"Yes, yes, you are right. You see, I have been accustomed to do with little. You must not take it amiss if I say things of that kind — I do it without thinking."

Presently Amrei got up. Her face was glowing, and when she stood before the glass, she exclaimed:

"Gracious heavens! How can it be? All this seems almost impossible!"

"Well, there are still some hard planks to pierce; but I am not worrying about that. Now lie down and rest for a short time while I look for a Bernese chaise-wagon — you can't ride on horseback with me in the daytime — and we want one anyway."

"I cannot sleep — I have a letter to write to Haldenbrunn. I am away from there now, and yet I enjoyed a great many good times there. And I have other matters to settle, besides."

"Very well, do that until I come back."

John went out, and Amrei wrote a long letter to the Magistrate in Haldenbrunn, thanking the entire community

for benefits received, and promising to adopt a child from the place some day, if it were possible; and she once more begged to have Black Marianne's hymn-book placed under the good old woman's head. When she had finished, she sealed the letter and pressed her lips tight together with the remark:

"So! Now I have done my duty to the people of Haldenbrunn."

But she quickly tore the letter open again, for she considered it her duty to show John what she had written. But a long time passed and he did not return. And Amrei blushed when the chatty hostess said:

"I suppose your husband has some business at the Townhall?"

It seemed to strike her with a strange shock to have John called her "husband" for the first time.

She could not answer, and the hostess looked at her in wonder. She knew no other way of escaping from her strange glances than by going out in front of the house, where she sat on some piled-up boards for a long time, waiting for John. It was, indeed, a long time before he did come back; and when at last she caught sight of him, she said:

"When something calls you away like that again, you'll take me with you, won't you?"

"Oh," he answered, "so you were afraid, were you? Did you think I had gone off and left you? What would you think if I were to leave you here and simply ride away?"

Amrei started, and then she said, severely:

"I can't say that you are very witty; in fact to joke about such a thing as that is miserably stupid. I am sorry that you said that; for you did something that is bad for you if you realize it, and bad for you if you don't realize it. You talk about riding away, and think that I am to cry to amuse you. Do you imagine, perhaps, that because you have a horse and money, you can do as you please with

me? No, your horse carried us away together, and I came with you. What would you think if I were to say jokingly: 'How would it be if I left you alone?' I am sorry that you made such a jest!"

"Yes, yes, I'll say that you are right. But now, forget about it."

"No! I talk of a thing as long as there is anything about it in me, when I am the offended person, and it is for me to stop talking about it when I choose. And you offended yourself, too, in this matter—I mean your real self, the person you are, and ought to be. When any one else says anything that is not right, I can jump over it, but on you there must not be a single spot; and believe me, to joke about such a thing as that, is as if one took the crucifix yonder to play with as a doll."

"Oho, it's not as bad as that! But it seems to me you can't appreciate a jest."

"I can appreciate one very well, as you shall see, but no such a one as that. But now, that's enough about it; now I have finished and shall think nothing more of it."

This little incident showed both of them early that, with all their mutual devotion, they must be careful with each other. Amrei felt that she had been too severe, whereas John was made to realize that it did not behoove him to make jest of Amrei's solitary position, and of her absolute dependence upon him. They did not say this to each other, but each of them knew that the other felt it.

The little cloud that had thus come up soon evaporated under the bright sun that now broke through it. And Amrei rejoiced like a child when a pretty, green Bernese chaise-wagon came, with a round, padded seat in it; and before the horse had been hitched to it, she took her seat and clapped her hands with joy.

"Now you have only to make me fly!" she said to John, who was busy hitching the horse. "I have ridden horseback with you, and now I am driving with you; there is nothing left for me to do but fly."

[The two lovers now started out again, and were supremely happy as they rode along, discussing all sorts of things. They came upon an old woman by the road-side, and it gave Amrei a thrill of satisfaction she never before had felt to be able to throw out a pair of shoes to her. John commended this charitable instinct in her, and then began to tell her all about his home.]

Was it by a tacit agreement, or was it due to the influence which the present time exerted upon them, that they spoke not a word of how their arrival at John's house was to be arranged until toward noon, when they reached the outskirts of Zumarshofen? Only when they began to meet people who knew John, and who saluted him with glances of wonder at his companion, did he declare to Amrei that he had thought of two ways in which the thing might best be done. Either he would take Amrei to his sister, who lived a short distance further on — one could see the steeple of her village peering up from behind a hill — and then go home alone and explain everything, or else he would take Amrei home at once — that is, she should get down half a mile before they got there, and enter the house alone in the character of a maid.

Amrei showed great cleverness in explaining what should guide them in this matter, and what might come of their adopting either of the two methods of procedure proposed by John. If she stopped at his sister's, she would first have to win over to her side a person who would not be the one with whom the final decision lay, and it might result in all kinds of complications, the end of which could not be foreseen. And moreover, it would always be an unpleasant reflection, and there would be all sorts of remarks made about it — as if she had not dared to go straight to the house. The second plan seemed to her the better one; but it went against her very soul to enter the house by means of a deception. His mother, to be sure, had promised years ago to take her into her service; but she did not want to go into her service now, and it would be almost like stealing

to try to worm herself into favor with the old people in that way. And furthermore in such a disguise she would be sure to do everything clumsily; she would not be able to be natural and straightforward, and if she had to place a chair for his father, she would be sure to overturn it, for she would always be thinking: "You are doing this to deceive him." Moreover, even supposing all this could be done, how could she afterward appear before the servants, when they learned that their mistress had been obliged to smuggle herself into the house as a maid? And she would not be able to speak a single word with John all the time. She closed her explanation with the words:

"I have told you this only because you wanted to hear my opinion, too, and if you talk anything over with me, I must speak out freely what is in my mind. But I tell you, at the same time, whatever you wish, and whatever you tell me to do, I shall do it. If you say it should be *so, so* it shall be. I'll obey you without objection, and whatever you lay upon me to do, that shall I do as best I can."

"Yes, yes, you are right," said John, absorbed in thought. "They are both crooked ways, the first the less so. But now that we are so near home, we must make up our minds quickly. Do you see that bare patch in the forest yonder on the hill, with the little hut on it? And do you see the cows, which look as small as beetles? That's our upland pasture, that's where I intend to put your Damie."

Amrei cried out in amazement:

"Good heavens! To think where men will venture!—But that must be good pasturing land."

"So it is; but when father gives up the farm to me, I shall introduce more stall-feeding—it's the better way. But old people are fond of retaining old customs. But why are we chattering again? And now that we are so near! If I had only thought about this sooner! My head seems on fire."

"Only keep calm; we must think it over quietly. I have a vague idea of a way it can be done, but it doesn't seem quite plain yet."

"Ah! What do you think?"

"No, you think about it too. Perhaps you'll hit upon the right way yourself. It's a matter for you to arrange, and both of our minds are in such confusion now, that it will be a relief to us if we both hit upon a way at once."

"Yes, I have an idea already. In the next village but one there is a clergyman, whom I know very well, and who will give us the best advice. But wait! Here is a better way yet. Suppose I stay yonder in the valley at the miller's, and you go up to the farm and simply tell my parents the whole story. You'll have my mother on your side directly; and you are clever, and you'll manage my father in no time so that you can wind him around your finger. Yes, that is the best way. Then we shan't have to wait, and we shall have asked no stranger for help. What do you think? Is that putting too much upon you?"

"That was exactly my idea too. So now there is no more considering to be done, no more at all. That way shall stand as fast as if it were down in ink. That's the way it shall be done, and 'quick to work makes the master.' Oh, you don't know what a dear, good, splendid, honest fellow you are!"

"No, it's you! But that is all the same now, for we two are but one honest person, and so we shall remain. Look here — give me your hand; that yonder is our first field. God greet thee, wifee, for now thou art at home! And hurrah! there's our stork flying up. Stork! cry 'Welcome;' this is your new mistress! 'I'll tell you more later!' Now, Amrei, don't be gone too long, and send some one down to me at the mill as soon as you can — if the wagoner is at home, you'd best send him, for he can run like a hare. There, do you see that house yonder, with the stork's nest, and the two barns on the hillside, to the left of the wood? There's a linden by the house — do you see it?

"Yes."

"That's our house. Now, come, get you down. You can't miss your way now."

John got down and helped Amrei out of the chaise. The girl, holding the necklace, which she had put into her pocket, like a rosary in her clasped hands, prayed silently; John also took off his hat, and his lips moved. The two did not say another word to each other, but Amrei went on alone. John stood looking after her for a long time, leaning against the white horse. Once she turned about and tried to coax the dog to return to his master. But he would not go; he would run aside into the field, and then start to follow her again; and not until John whistled, did the creature come back to him.

John drove on to the mill and stopped there. He learned that his father had been there an hour ago to wait for him, but had gone away again. John was glad to hear that his father was strong and on his feet again, and glad because he knew that Amrei would now find both his parents at home. The people in the mill could not understand why John lingered with them, and yet would hardly listen to a word they said. He kept going in and out, and looking up the road toward the farm; for John was very anxious and restless. He counted the steps that Amrei had to go; now she would be in the fields, now she would have to go to this, now to that hedge; now she would be speaking to his parents. And after all he could not completely satisfy himself as to just what she would be doing.

Chapter XVIII

THE FIRST HEARTH-FIRE

Meanwhile Amrei went on, wrapped in thought. Her manner showed the effect of the self-reliance she had learned to practice in her childhood. It was not for nothing that she had been accustomed to solve riddles, and that from day to day she had struggled with life's difficulties. The whole strength of the character she had acquired was

firmly and securely implanted within her. Without further question, as a man goes forward to meet a necessity, quiet and self-possessed, so did she, boldly and of good courage, go on her way.

She had not gone far when she saw a farmer sitting by the wayside, with a red cane between his legs; and on this cane he was resting his two hands and his chin.

"God greet you," said Amrei. "Are you enjoying a rest?"

"Yes. Where are you going?"

"Up yonder to the farm. Are you going there too? If so, you may lean on me."

"Yes, that is the way," said the old man with a grin. "Thirty years ago I should have cared more about it, if such a pretty girl had said that to me; I should have jumped like a colt."

"But to those who can jump like colts one doesn't say such things," replied Amrei, laughing.

"You are rich," said the old man. He seemed to like to talk, and smiled as he took a pinch of snuff out of his horn snuff-box.

"How can you tell that I am rich?"

"Your teeth are worth ten thousand guilders. There's many a one would give ten thousand guilders to have them in his mouth."

"I have no time for jesting. Now, God keep you!"

"Wait a little. I'll go with you — but you must not walk too fast." Amrei carefully helped the old man to his feet, and he remarked:

"You are strong," — and in his teasing way he made himself more helpless and heavier than he actually was. As they walked along, he asked:

"To whom are you going at the farm?"

"To the farmer and his wife."

"What do you want of them?"

"That I shall tell them."

"Well, if you want anything of them, you had better turn back at once. The mistress would give you something,

but she has no authority to, and the farmer, he's tight — he's got a board on his neck, and a stiff thumb into the bargain."

"I don't want anything given me — I bring them something," said Amrei.

On the way they met an older man going to the field with his scythe; and the old farmer walking with Amrei called out to him with a queer blink in his eyes:

"Do you know if miserly Farmer Landfried is at home?"

"I think so, but I don't know," answered the man with the scythe, and he turned away into the field.

There was a peculiar twitching in his face. And now, as he walked along, his shoulders seemed to Amrei to be shaking up and down; he was evidently laughing. Amrei looked at her companion's face and saw the roguery in it. Suddenly she recognized in the withered features the face of the man to whom she had given a jug of water, years ago, on the Holderwasen. Snapping her fingers softly, she said to herself:

"Stop! Now I know!" And then she added aloud: "It's wrong of you to speak in that way of the Farmer to a stranger like me, whom you don't know, and who might be a relative of his. And I'm sure it is not true what you say. They do say, to be sure, that the Farmer is tight; but when you come right down to it, I dare say he has an honest heart, and simply doesn't like to make an outcry about it when he does a good deed. And a man who has such good children as his are said to be, must be a good man himself. And perhaps he likes to make himself out bad before the world, simply because he doesn't care what others think of him; and I don't think the worse of him for that."

"You have not left your tongue behind you. Where do you come from?"

"Not from this neighborhood — from the Black Forest."

"What's the name of the place?"

"Haldenbrunn."

"Oh! Have you come all the way from there on foot?"

"No, somebody let me ride with him. He's the son of the Farmer yonder — a good, honest man."

"Ah, at his age I should have let you ride with me too!"

They had now come to the farm, and the old man went with Amrei into the room and cried:

"Mother, where are you?"

The wife came out of another room, and Amrei's hands trembled; she would gladly have fallen upon her neck — but she could not — she dared not.

Then the Farmer, bursting into laughter, said:

"Just think, dame! Here's a girl from Haldenbrunn, and she has something to say to Farmer Landfried and his wife, but she won't tell me what it is. Now do you tell her what my name is."

"Why, that's the Farmer himself," said the woman; and she welcomed the old man home by taking his hat from his head and hanging it up on a peg over the stove.

"Do you see now?" said the old man to Amrei, triumphantly. "Now say what you like."

"Won't you sit down," said the mother, pointing to a chair.

Amrei drew a deep breath and began:

"You may believe me when I say that no child could have thought more about you than I have done, long ago, long before these last days. Do you remember Josenhans, by the pond, where the road turns off to Endringen?"

"Surely, surely!" said the two old people.

"Well, I am Josenhans's daughter!"

"Why, I thought I knew you!" exclaimed the old woman. "God greet you!" She held out her hand to Amrei, and said: "You have grown to be a strong, comely girl. Now tell me what has brought you here."

"She rode part of the way with our John," the Farmer interposed. "He'll be here directly."

The mother gave a start. She had an inkling of something to come, and reminded her husband that, when John went away, she had thought of the Josenhans children.

"And I have a remembrance from both of you," said Amrei, and she brought out the necklace and the piece of money wrapped in paper. "You gave me that the last time you were in our village."

"See there—you lied to me, you told me that you had lost it," cried the Farmer to his wife, reproachfully.

"And here," continued Amrei, holding out to him the groschen in its paper cover; "here's the piece of money you gave me when I was keeping geese on the Holderwasen, and gave you a drink from my jug."

"Yes, yes, that's all right! But what does it all mean? What you've had given you, you may keep," said the Farmer.

Amrei stood up and said:

"I have one thing to ask you. Let me speak quite freely for a few minutes, may I?"

"Yes, why not?"

"Look—your John wanted to take me with him and bring me here as a maid. At any other time I would have been glad to serve in your house, indeed, rather than anywhere else. But now it would have been dishonest; and to people to whom I want to be honest all my life long, I won't come for the first time with a lie in my mouth. Now everything must be as open as the day. In a word, John and I love each other from the bottom of our hearts, and he wants to have me for his wife."

"Oho!" cried the Farmer, and he stood up so quickly that one could easily see that his former helplessness had been only feigned. "Oho!" he called out again, as if one of his horses were running away.

But his wife put out her hand and held him, saying:

"Let her finish what she has to say."

And Amrei went on:

"Believe me, I have sense enough to know that one cannot take a girl, out of pity, for a daughter-in-law. You can give me something, you can give me a great deal, but to take me for your daughter-in-law out of pity, is some-

thing you cannot do, and I do not wish you to do it. I haven't a groschen of money — oh, yes, the groschen you gave me on the Holderwasen I still have — for nobody would take it for a groschen," she added, turning to the Farmer, who could not repress a smile. "I have nothing of my own, nay, worse than that — I have a brother who is strong and healthy, but for whom I have to provide. I have kept geese, and I have been the most insignificant person in the village, and all that is true. But nobody can say the least harm of me, and that, too, is true. And as far as those things which are really given to people by God are concerned, I could say to any princess: 'I don't put myself one hair's breadth behind you, if you have seven golden crowns on your head.' I would rather have somebody else say these things for me, for I am not fond of talking about myself. But all my life I have been obliged to speak for myself, and today, for the last time, I do it, when life and death are at stake. By that I mean — don't misunderstand me — if you won't have me, I shall go quietly away; I shall do myself no harm, I shall not jump into the water, or hang myself. I shall merely look for a new position, and thank God that such a good man once wanted to have me for his wife; and I'll consider that it was not God's will that it should be so — " Amrei's voice faltered, and her form seemed to dilate. And then her voice grew stronger again, as she summoned all her firmness and said, solemnly: "But prove to yourselves — ask yourselves in your deepest conscience, whether what you do is God's will.— I have nothing more to say."

Amrei sat down. All three were silent for a time, and then the old man said:

"Why, you can preach like a clergyman."

But the mother dried her eyes with her apron, and said:

"Why not? Clergymen have not more than one mind and one heart!"

"Yes, that's you!" cried the old man with a sneer. "There's something of a parson in you, too. If any one comes to you with a few speeches like that, you're cooked directly!"

"And you talk as if you would not be cooked or softened till you die," retorted the wife.

"Oh, indeed!" said the old man bitterly. "Now look you, you saint from the lowlands; you're bringing a fine sort of peace into my house; you have managed already to make my wife turn against me—you have captured her already. Well, I suppose you can wait until death has carried me off, and then you can do what you please."

"No!" exclaimed Amrei, "I won't have that! Just as little as I wish that John should take me for his wife without your blessing, just so little do I wish that the sin should be in our hearts, that we should both be waiting for you to die. I scarcely knew my parents, I cannot remember them—I only love them as one loves God, without ever having seen Him. But I also know what it is to die. Last night I closed Black Marianne's eyes; I did what she asked me to do all my life long, and yet now that she is dead, I sometimes think: How often you were impatient and bitter toward her, and how many a service you might have done her! And now she is lying there, and it is all over; you can do nothing more for her, and you can't crave her forgiveness for anything.—I know what it is to die, and I will not have—"

"But I will!" cried the old man; and he clenched his fists and set his teeth. "But I will!" he shouted again. "You stay here, and you belong to us! And now, whosoever likes may come, and let him say what he pleases. You, and no one but you, shall have my John!"

The mother ran to the old man and embraced him; and he, not being accustomed to it, called out in surprise:

"What are you doing?"

"Giving you a kiss. You deserve it, for you are a better man than you make yourself out to be."

The old man, who all this time had a pinch of snuff between his fingers which he did not want to waste, took it quickly, and then said:

"Well, I don't object," but he added: "But now I shall

dismiss you, for I have much younger lips to kiss, which taste better. Come here, you disguised parson."

"I'll come, but first you must call me by name."

"Well, what is your name?"

"You need not know that, for you can give me a name yourself — you know what name I mean."

"You're a clever one! Well, if you like, come here, daughter-in-law. Does that name suit you?"

In reply Amrei flung herself upon him.

"Am I not to be asked at all?" complained the mother with a radiant face.

The old man had become quite saucy in his joy. He took Amrei by the hand, and asked, in a satirical imitation of a clergyman's voice:

"Now I demand of you, honorable Cordula Catherine, called Dame Landfried, will you take this —" and he whispered to the girl aside:

"What is your Christian name?"

"Amrei."

Then the Farmer continued in the same tone:

"Will you take this Amrei Josenhans of Haldenbrunn to be your daughter-in-law, and never let her have a word to say, as you do to your husband, feed her badly, abuse her, oppress her, and as they say, bully her generally?"

The old fellow seemed beside himself; some strange revulsion had taken place within him. And while Amrei hung around the mother's neck, and would not let her go, the old man struck his red cane on the table and cried:

"Where's that good-for-nothing, John? Here's a fellow who sends his bride for us to take care of, and goes wandering about the world himself! Who ever heard of such a thing?"

Amrei then tore herself away, and said that the wagoner, or some one else, must be sent at once to the mill to get John, who was waiting there. The father declared that he ought to be left in suspense in the mill for at least three hours; that should be his punishment for having hidden in such a cowardly way behind a petticoat. And when he

came home, he should wear a woman's hood; in fact, he wouldn't have him in the house, for when John came, he, the father, would have nothing of the bride at all, and it made him angry already to think of the foolish way in which they would carry on together.

Meanwhile the mother managed to slip away and send the quick-footed wagoner to the mill.

And now the mother thought that Amrei ought to have some refreshment. She wanted to cook an omelette immediately, but Amrei begged to be allowed to light the first fire in the house that was to prepare something for herself, and asked that she might cook something for her parents too. They let her have her way, and the two old people went with her into the kitchen. She knew how to manage it all so cleverly, seeing at a glance where everything was, and hardly requiring to ask a single question, that the old Farmer kept nodding to his wife, and said at last:

"She can do housekeeping like singing at sight; she can read it all off from the page, like the new schoolmaster."

The three stood by the fire, which was blazing merrily, when John came in; and the fire was not blazing more merrily on the hearth than was inward happiness blazing in the eyes of all three. The hearth and its fire became a holy altar, surrounded by worshippers, who, however, only laughed and teased one another.

Chapter XIX

SECRET TREASURES

Amrei felt so much at home in the house that, by the second day, she was acting as if she had been brought up there from childhood. The old man followed her around and looked on, while she knowingly took things in hand and accomplished them calmly and steadily, without hurrying or resting.

There are people who, when they go to get the least thing, a plate or a jug, disturb the thoughts of everybody in the room, and seem to drag, so to speak, the attention of all present about with them. Amrei, on the contrary, knew how to manage and accomplish everything in such a way that it was restful to watch her work, and people were consequently so much the more grateful for everything she did for them. How often had the Farmer complained about the fact that, when the salt was wanted, some one always had to rise from the table to get it! But now Amrei herself set the table, and she took care to put the salt-cellar on immediately after the cloth was spread. When the Farmer praised Amrei for this, his wife said with a smile:

"You talk as if you had not lived at all until now, and as if you had always been obliged to eat your food without salt or seasoning!"

And then John told them that Amrei was also called the Salt Countess, and he related the story of the King and his Daughter.

It was a happy family — in the parlor, in the yard, in the field. The Farmer often said that his food for years had not tasted so good to him as it did now; and he used to get Amrei to prepare things for him three or four times a day, at quite irregular hours. And he made her sit with him while he ate it.

The wife, with a feeling of proud satisfaction, took Amrei into the dairy, and then into the store-rooms. In the latter place she opened a large, gaily-painted chest, full of fine, bleached linen, and said:

"This is your outfit — nothing is lacking but shoes. I am very glad that you kept the shoes you got with your wages, for I have a superstition about that."

When Amrei questioned her about the way things had been done in the house hitherto, she nodded approvingly. She did not, however, express any approval in words, but the confidential tone in which she discussed ordinary matters made it quite evident that she felt it. The very

supremity of satisfaction lay in her words. And when she began to depute certain matters in the household management to Barefoot, she said:

"Child, let me tell you something; if there is anything about our ways of doing things in the house that doesn't please you, you needn't be afraid to alter it so that it suits you. I am not one of those who think that things must always remain just as they were originally arranged, and that no changes should be made. You have a perfect right to do as you think best, and I shall be glad to see a fresh hand at work. Only if you'll listen to me — I advise you, for your own sake, to do it gradually."

It was pleasant, indeed, to see old experience and young strength joining hands, physically and mentally. Amrei declared with heartfelt sincerity that she found everything capitally arranged, and that she should be only too glad if one day, when she was old, the household was in as good order as it was now.

"You look far ahead," said the old woman. "And that is a good thing; for whosoever thinks of the future thinks of the past as well, and so you will not forget me when I am gone."

Messengers had been sent out to announce the family event to the sons and sons-in-law of the house, and to invite them to Zumarshofen the following Sunday. After that the old man trotted about after Amrei more than ever; he seemed to have something on his mind which he wanted to say, but could not express.

There is a saying about buried treasures to the effect that a black monster squats over them, and that on holy nights a blue flame appears over the spot where the rich treasures lie buried; furthermore that children, born on Sunday, can see this flame, and if they remain calm and unmoved, they can secure the treasure. One would never have thought that such a treasure was hidden in old Farmer Landfried, and that squatting over it was black obstinacy and contempt for humankind. But Amrei saw the little

blue flame hovering above him, and knew how to conduct herself in such a way as to release the treasure.

No one could tell how she produced such an effect upon him that he manifestly strove to appear particularly good and benevolent in her eyes — the mere fact that he took any interest in a poor girl at all was in itself a wonder. This alone was clear to Amrei — that he did not want his wife alone to appear as the just and amiable one, and himself as the angry snarler, of whom people must be afraid. Perhaps the fact that Amrei, even before she knew who he was, had accused him of not thinking it worth while to appear good and kind before men, had opened his heart. At all events he had so much to say now, every time he encountered her, that it seemed as if he had been keeping all his thoughts in a savings-box, which he was at last opening. And in it there were some very singular old coins which had declined in value, also some large medals which were no longer in circulation at all, and again there were some quite fresh ones, of pure, unalloyed silver. He could not express his thoughts as well as his wife had done on that day when she had talked with John — his language was stiff in all its joints — but still he managed to hit the point, and almost gave himself the appearance of taking Amrei's part against his wife; nor was it at all amiss when he said:

"Look you, the Dame is like the 'good hour' itself; but the good hour is not a good day, a good week, or a good year. She is but a woman, and with women it is always April weather; for a woman is only half a person — that I maintain, and nobody can dissuade me from it!"

"You give us fine praise," said Amrei.

"Yes, it is true," said the Farmer, "I am talking to you. But as I was saying, the Dame is a good soul, only she's too good. Consequently it annoys her when one doesn't do as she says, because she means well; and she thinks one doesn't know how good she really is, if one does not obey her. She can't understand that often one does not obey

her because what she asks is inadvisable, however good her intentions may have been. And remember this especially; don't ever do anything after her, that is, just as she does it; do it your own way, the way you think is right — she likes that much better. She does not like to have it appear that people are subject to her orders — but you will find all that out yourself. And if anything should happen, for heaven's sake don't put your husband between two fires! There is nothing worse than when a husband stands between his wife and mother, and the mother says: 'I no longer amount to anything as far as my daughter-in-law is concerned; yes, even my own children are untrue to me;' and the wife says: 'Yes, now I see what kind of a man you are — you let your wife be trampled on!' I advise you, if anything should come up that you can't manage by yourself, to tell me about it quietly, and I'll help you. But, as I say, don't put your husband between two fires. He has been a bit spoiled by his mother, but he'll grow more manly now. Just keep on pushing ahead, and think of me as one of your family, and as your natural protector. For that is true; on your mother's side I am very distantly related to you."

And now he tried to disentangle a strangely intricate genealogy; but he was unable to find the right thread, and succeeded only in getting the different relationships more and more mixed up, like a skein of yarn. And at last he always concluded by saying:

"You may believe me on my word that we are related; for we *are* related, although I can't quite figure out how."

And now the time before his end had really come, when he no longer gave away merely bad grosschens; it did him good to donate at last a part of his possessions having some real significance and value. For one evening he called Amrei out behind the house and said to her:

"Look, my girl, you are good and sensible, but you don't know just how it is with a man. My John has a good heart, but some day it may possibly annoy him, the thought that you had absolutely nothing of your own. So then, take this,

but don't tell a soul anything about it, or from whom you got it. Say that you worked hard and saved it up. There — take it!"

He handed her a stocking full of round thalers, and added:

"That was not to have been found until after I was dead; but it is better so — he'll get it now and think it came from you. This whole affair is out of the common way, so that it can easily be added that you had a secret sum of money. But don't forget that there are also thirty-two feather-thalers in it, which are worth a grosschen each more than ordinary thalers. Take good care of it — put it in the chest where your linen is, and always keep the key with you. And on Sunday, when the entire family is assembled, pour it out on the table."

"I don't like to do that. I think John ought to do that, if it is necessary to do it at all."

"It is necessary. But if you like, John may do it — but sh! put it out of sight! — quickly! Hide it in your apron, for I hear John coming! I think he is jealous." And the two parted in haste.

And that very evening the mother took Amrei up into the attic, and out of a drawer drew forth a tolerably heavy bag. The cord which held it together was tied and knotted in a remarkable manner. She said to Amrei:

"There — untie that!"

Amrei tried, but it was hard work.

"Wait! I'll get a pair of shears and we'll cut it open!"

"No," objected Amrei. "I don't like to do that! Just have a little patience, mother, I'll undo it all right!"

The mother smiled; and Amrei, with great difficulty, but with a skilful hand, finally got the cord untied. Then the old woman said:

"Good! That's fine! Now look at what's inside of it."

Amrei looked in and saw a quantity of gold and silver coins. Then the mother went on to say:

"Look you, child, you have wrought a miracle upon the

Farmer. Even now I can't understand how he came to give in — but you have not entirely converted him yet. My husband is always talking about it, saying what a pity it is that you have nothing of your own. He can't get over it, and keeps thinking that you must have a neat little sum tucked away somewhere, and that you are deceiving us about it, merely to find out if we are content to take you as you are. He won't let himself be talked out of that notion, and so I hit upon an idea. God will not impute it to us as a sin. Look — this is what I have saved during the thirty-six years my husband and I have kept house together. There was no deception about it, and some of it I inherited from my mother anyway. But now you take it and say it is your property. It will make the Farmer very happy, especially since he was clever enough to suspect it beforehand. Why do you look at me in such a confused way? Believe me when I tell you that you may do it — there is no wrong in it, for I have thought it over time and again. Now, go and hide it, and don't say a word against it — not a single word. Don't thank me or do anything — for it's the same to me whether my child gets it now or later, and it will please my husband while he's yet alive. And now, quick! — tie it up again!"

Early the next morning Amrei told John all about what his parents had said to her, and what they had given her. And John cried out joyously:

"Lord in heaven, forgive me! I could have believed such a thing of my mother, but of my father I should never have dreamt it! Why, you must be a witch! And look you! We will do that — we won't tell either of them about the other. And the best part of it is, that each wants to deceive the other, whereas, in reality, both of them will be deceived! Yes, they must both think that you really had some extra money! Hurrah! That will be a merry jest for the betrothal party!"

But in the midst of all the joy in the house there were all sorts of anxieties too!

Chapter XX

IN THE FAMILY CIRCLE

It is not morality that rules the world, but a hardened form of it called "custom." As the world is now disposed, it would rather forgive an offense against morality than an offense against custom. Happy are those times and countries in which morality and custom are still one. Every dispute that arises, on a small scale as well as on a large one, in general as well as in particular, hinges on the effort to reconcile the contradiction between these two; and to melt the hardened form of custom back into the true ore of morality, and stamp the coin anew according to its value.

Even here, in this little story dealing with people who live apart from the great tumult of the world, the reflection of this truth is seen.

The mother, who was secretly the most rejoiced over the happy realization of her hopes, was yet full of peculiar anxiety concerning the opinion of the world.

"After all," she said, complainingly, to Amrei, "you did a thoughtless thing to come into the house in the way you did, so that we cannot go and fetch you to the wedding. It was not good, not customary. If I could only send you away for a short time, or else John, so that it would all be more according to rule."

And to John she said plaintively:

"I hear already the talk there'll be if you marry in such a hurry. People will say: 'Twice asked, the third time persuaded — that's the way worthless people do it!'"

But she allowed herself to be pacified by both of them, and smiled when John said:

"Mother, you have studied up everything, like a clergyman. Then tell me, why should decent people refrain from doing something, simply because indecent people use it as a cloak? Can any one say anything bad about me?"

"No,— you have been a good lad all your life."

"Well, then let them have a little confidence in me now, and believe that a thing may be good, even if it does not look so at first sight. I have a right to ask that much of them. The way Amrei and I came together was out of the usual order, to be sure, and the affair has gone on in its own way from the very beginning. But it wasn't a bad way. Why, it's like a miracle, if we look at it rightly. And what is it to us if people refuse to believe in miracles nowadays, and prefer to find all sorts of badness in these things? One must have courage and not ask the world's opinion in everything. The clergyman at Hirlingen once said: 'If a prophet were to rise today, he would first have to pass the government examination and show that what he wanted was in the regular order.' Now, mother, when one knows for oneself that something is right, then it is best to go forward in a straight line and push aside, right and left, whatever stands in one's way. Let people stare and wonder for a while — they will think better of it in time."

The mother very likely felt that a thing might be accepted as a miracle if it came in the form of a sudden, happy event, but that even the most unusual things later on must gradually conform to the laws of tradition and of strong, established custom. The wedding might appear as a miracle, but the marriage, which involved a continuance, would not. She therefore said:

"With all these people, whom you now look at with proud indifference, because you know that you are doing right — with all these people you'll have to live, and you'll expect them, not to look at you askance, but to give you due respect. Now if they are to do that, you must give and allow them what they are accustomed to demand. You cannot force them to make an exception in your case, and you can't run after each one separately and say: 'If you knew how it all came about, you would say that I was quite right in doing it.'"

But John rejoined:

"You shall see that nobody will have anything to say

against my Amrei, when he or she has known her a single hour!"

And he resorted to a good way, not only of pacifying his mother, but also of causing her to rejoice in her innermost soul. He reported to her how all the warnings she had given him, and all the ways of testing a girl she had enumerated, had found exact correspondence in Amrei, as if she had been made to order. And she could not help laughing, when he concluded:

"You must have had the last in your head upon which the shoes up above are made; for they fit her who is to run about in them as if they were made for her." The mother let herself be quieted.

On the Saturday morning previous to the family gathering, Damie made his appearance; but he was immediately dispatched back to Haldenbrunn to procure all the necessary papers from the magistrate in the town-hall.

The first Sunday was an anxious day at Farmer Landfried's. The old people had accepted Amrei, but how would it be with the rest of the family? It is no easy matter to enter a large family of that kind unless the way is paved with horses and wagons, and all sorts of furniture and money, and a number of relatives.

Many wagons arrived that Sunday at Farmer Landfried's from the uplands and lowlands. There came driving up brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, and all their relations.

"John has a wife, and he brought her straight home without her parents, without a clergyman, and without the authorities having had a word to say in the matter. She must be a beauty that he found behind a hedge somewhere!"

This is what all of them were saying.

The horses on the wagons also suffered for what had happened at Farmer Landfried's. They received many a lash, and when they kicked, they suffered all the more for it; for whoever was driving whipped them until his arm was

tired. This caused many a wrangle with the wives, who sat beside the drivers and protested and scolded about such a reckless, cruel way of driving.

A little fortress of carriages stood in Farmer Landfried's courtyard, and in the house the entire large family was assembled. There they sat together in high water-boots, or in clouted laced-boots, and with three-cornered hats, some worn with the corner, others with the broad side forward. The women whispered among themselves, and then made signs to their husbands, or else said to them quietly: "Just let us alone — we will drive the strange bird out all right." And a bitter, jeering laugh arose when it was rumored here and there, that Amrei had been a goose-girl.

At last Amrei entered; but she could not offer her hand to anybody. For she was carrying a large bottle of red wine under her arm, and so many glasses, besides two plates of cake, that it seemed as if she had seven hands. Every finger-joint appeared to be a hand; but she put everything so gently and noiselessly on the table, on which her mother-in-law had spread a white cloth, that everybody looked at her in wonder. Then, silently and without any signs of trepidation, she filled all the glasses, and said:

"My parents have given me authority to bid you a hearty welcome! Now drink!"

"We are not used to it in the morning," said a heavy man, with an uncommonly large nose; and he spread himself out in his chair. This was George, John's oldest brother.

"We drink only goose-wine (water)," said one of the women; and a scarcely-suppressed laugh went around the room.

Amrei felt the taunt, but kept her temper; and John's sister was the first to take the glass and drink to her. She first clinked her glass against John's with a "May God bless you!" She only half responded to Amrei, who also held out her glass. Now, the other women considered it impolite, even sinful,— for, at the first draught, the so-

called "John's-draught," it is looked upon as sinful to hold back — not to respond; and the men also let themselves be persuaded, so that for a time nothing was heard but the clinking and putting down of glasses.

"Father is right," old Dame Landfried at last said to her daughter. "Amrei looks as if she were your sister, but she resembles still more Elizabeth, who died."

"Yes; none of you have lost by it. If Elizabeth had lived, the property would have been smaller by one share anyway," observed the father. And the mother added:

"But now she has been given back to us again."

The old man had hit the spot where, as a matter of fact, all of them were sore, although they tried to persuade themselves, and each other, that they were prejudiced against Amrei because she had come among them without any relatives of her own. And while Amrei was talking to John's sister, the old farmer said to his son in a low voice:

"One would never imagine, to look at her, what she has. Just think! — she has a bag stuffed full of crown thalers! But you must not say anything to any one about it."

This injunction was so well obeyed, that within a few minutes every person in the room knew about the bag of thalers, with the exception of John's sister, who afterward took great credit to herself for having been so friendly to Amrei, although she thought that Amrei had not a farthing of her own.

Sure enough! John had gone out, and he was now entering again with a large bag, on which was written the name "Josenhans of Haldenbrunn;" and when he poured out the rich contents, which rolled rattling and clinking over the table, all were dumbfounded. But the most astonished of all were the father and mother.

So Amrei had really had a secret treasure! For there was much more here than either one had given her. Amrei did not dare to look up, and every one praised her for her unexampled humility. And now she succeeded in winning them all over to her side; and when the numerous members

of the family took their leave in the evening, each one said to her in secret:

"Look you; it was not I who was against you because you had nothing — it was so-and-so, who was always opposing you. I say now, as I said and thought before, that even if you had had nothing but the clothes you wore, you were cut out for our family; and I could not have wished for a better wife for John, or a better daughter-in-law for the old people."

It was easy to say that now, for they all thought that Amrei had brought with her a considerable fortune in cash.

In Allgau they talked for years of the wonderful way in which young Farmer Landfried had brought home his wife, and told how finely he and his wife had danced together at their wedding, and especially did they praise a waltz called "Silverstep," the music for which they got from the lowlands.

And Damie? — he is one of the most noted shepherds in Allgau, and has, moreover, a lofty name, for he is known in the country as "Vulture Damie." Why? Because Damie has destroyed the nests of two dangerous vultures, and thus avenged himself on them for twice having stolen young lambs from him. If it were the custom to dub men knights nowadays, he would be called "Damian of Vulturescraig." Moreover, the male side of the Josenhanses of Vulturescraig will die with him, for he is still a bachelor. But he is a good uncle — better than the one in America. When the cattle are brought in at the end of the summer, he has many stories to tell his sister's children, on winter nights, about life in America, about Coaly Matthew in Mossbrook Wood, and about shepherds' adventures in the mountains of Allgau. In particular, he knows a number of funny stories to tell about a cow which he calls his "herd-cow," and which wears a deep-sounding bell.

And Damie said once to his sister:

"Dame" — for that is what he always calls her —

"Dame, your oldest boy takes after you, and uses just such words as you used to. What do you think? — the boy said to me today: 'Uncle, your herd-cow is your heart-cow too, isn't she?' Yes, the boy is just on your pattern."

Farmer John wanted to have his first little daughter christened "Barefoot," but it is no longer permissible to create names out of incidents in daily life. The name was not accepted in the church register, so that John had the child named "Barbara." But, on his own authority, he has changed that name to "Barefoot."

JEREMIAS GOTTHELF

ULI, THE FARMHAND

TRANSLATIONS AND SYNOPSES

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Chapter I

A MASTER AWAKES; A SERVANT IS AROUSED

DARK night lay upon the earth; still darker was the place where a subdued voice repeatedly called, "Johannes." It was a tiny chamber in a large farmhouse; the voice came from the great bed which almost filled the further end of the room. In it lay a farmer and his wife, and to him the latter cried "Johannes" until he presently began to grumble and finally to ask, "What do you want? What is it?"

"You'll have to get up and fodder the stock. It's after half-past four, and Uli didn't get home till after two and fell downstairs at that when he tried to get into his room. I should think you'd have waked up, he made such a noise. He was drunk, and now he won't want to get up; and anyhow I'd rather he wouldn't take a lantern into the stable while he's tipsy."

"Servants are a trial nowadays," said the farmer, striking a light and dressing. "You can hardly get 'em or pay 'em enough, and then you're supposed to do everything yourself and never say a word about anything. You're not master in your own house any more, and you can't do enough of your own errands to keep from quarrels and from being run down."

"But you can't let this go on," said his wife; "it's happening too often. Only last week he went off on two sprees; you know he drew his pay before Ash Wednesday. I'm not thinking of you alone, but also of Uli. If nothing's said to him he'll think he's got a right to go on so, and will keep on worse and worse, and then we'll have to take it on our consciences; for masters are masters after all, and let folks say what they will about the new fashion, that it's nobody's business what the servants do out of working hours, we're masters in our own house just the same, and we're responsible to God and men for what we allow in our house and what we overlook in our servants. Then too I'm thinking of the children. You must take him into the sitting-room after breakfast, and read him the riot act."

You must know that there prevails on many farms, especially those which belong to the real farmer aristocracy — i. e., those which have for a long time been handed down in the same family, so that family customs have been established and family respectability is cherished — the very pleasant custom of causing absolutely no quarrel, no violent scene, which could attract the neighbors' attention in any way. In proud calm the house stands amid the green trees; with calm, grave demeanor its indwellers move about and in it, and over the tree-tops sounds at most the neighing of the horses, never the voices of men. There is little noisy rebuke. Man and wife never rebuke each other in public; and mistakes of the servants they often ignore, or make, as it were in passing, a remark, let fall merely a word or a hint, which reaches only the ear for which it is intended. When something unusual occurs or the measure is full, they call the sinner into the sitting-room as unostentatiously as possible, or seek him out while he is working alone, and "read him the riot act," as the saying is; and for this the master has usually prepared himself carefully. He performs this duty in perfect calm, quite like a father, keeps nothing from the sinner, not even the bitterest truth, but gives him a just hearing too, and puts before him the

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consequences of his misdoings with respect to his future destiny. And when the master is done he is content, and the affair is settled to this extent, that neither the rebuked one nor his fellows can detect the least thing in the conduct of the master — no bitterness, nor vehemence, nor anything else. These reprimands are mostly of good effect by virtue of the prevailing fatherly tone, the calmness of their delivery, and their considerately chosen setting. Of the self-control and calm serenity in such houses one can scarcely form a conception.

When the master was almost through in the stable Uli came along, but in silence; they spoke no word to each other. When the voice from the kitchen door called them to breakfast the master went at once to the well-trough and washed his hands, but Uli stood long undecided. Perhaps he would not have come to breakfast at all if the mistress herself had not called him again. He was ashamed to show his face, which was black and blue and bloody. He did not know that it is better to be ashamed of a thing before it is done, than afterward. But this he was to learn.

At the table no remark was passed, no question which might have concerned him; and the two maids did not even venture to show mocking faces, for the master and mistress wore serious ones. But when they had eaten and the maids were carrying out the dishes, and Uli, who had finished last, raised his elbows from the table and put his cap on his head again, showing that he had prayed and was going out, the master said, "A word with you," went into the sitting-room and shut the door behind them. The master sat down at the further end near the little table; Uli stood still by the door and assumed a sheepish expression which could as easily be transformed into defiance as into penitence. He was a tall, handsome lad, not yet twenty years old, powerful in build, but with something in his face that did not indicate innocence and moderation, and that by next year could make him look ten years older.

"Listen, Uli," the master began, "things can't go on this

way; you're getting too wild to suit me. You go on night revels and sprees too often. I won't trust my horses and cows to a man whose head is full of brandy or wine, and I can't send him into the stable with a lantern, especially when he smokes as you do. I've seen too many houses burned up by such carelessness. I don't know what you're thinking of and what you think is going to come of all this."

He hadn't burned up anything yet, Uli answered; he had always done his work, no one had needed to do it for him, and nobody had paid for what he drank; it was nobody's business what he spent on drink, it was his own money.

"But it's my servant," answered the master, "that's drinking up his money. When you carry on it comes back on me, and the people say that you're the Bottom-Farmer's man and that they can't imagine what he's thinking of to let you carry on so and to have such a servant as you. You haven't burned up any house yet, but think, Uli, wouldn't once be too much, and would you ever have a quiet moment again if you thought you had burned up my house, and if we and the children couldn't get out and were burned to death? And how about your work? I'd rather have you lie abed all day long. Why, you fall asleep under the cows you're milking, and you don't see, hear, or smell anything, and stumble around the house as if your liver was out of whack. It's terrible to watch you."

He wouldn't take this, said Uli, and if his work wasn't good enough for him he'd leave. But it was always so nowadays, you couldn't satisfy a master any more, even if working all the time; one was worse than the other. As for pay, they wanted to give less and less, and the food got worse every day. After awhile one would have to gather fleas, beetles, and grasshoppers if one wanted to have meat and fat with his vegetables.

"Listen, Uli," said the master, "you're in a bad temper still, and I oughtn't to have said anything to you. But I'm sorry for you, for you've been a fine lad and used to be able to work. For awhile I thought you'd turn out well,

and I was glad. But since you began this idling and night-running, you've become a different fellow. You don't care about anything any more; you're a sorehead, and when I say the least word to you you either sauce me or sulk for a week. Go now, think it over, and if you're not willing to change, then in God's name leave me; I don't want you any longer. Give me your answer in a week."

He'd soon have his mind made up, it wouldn't take a week, Uli growled as he went out; but the master pretended not to hear.

When the master came out, his wife asked him as usual, "What did you say to him, and what did he say?"

"I couldn't do anything with him," answered the master. "Uli is still in a bad temper, for he hasn't slept off his spree yet; it would have been better to talk to him tomorrow or in the evening, after the natural seediness of 'the day after' had softened him up a little. Now I've given him time to think it over, and shall wait and see what comes of it."

Uli went out in bitter anger, as if the greatest injustice had been done him. He flung the tools around as though everything was to go to smash in the one day, and he bawled at the cattle until the master ached in every bone. But the latter forced himself to be calm, merely saying once, "Easy, easy!" With the other servants Uli had no dealings, but scowled at them too. As the master had not reprimanded him before the others, he did not care to inform them of his disgrace, and because he did not make common cause with them he considered that they were on the master's side and his enemies — a state of mind quite in accord with that deeply truthful saying: "He that is not for me is against me." So there was no one to put notions into his head, and he had no opportunity to swear that the devil or what-not might take him if he stayed here an hour after his time was up.

Little by little the wine and other spirits departed from him, and more and more sluggish grew his limbs; the previ-

ous tension yielded to an intolerable exhaustion, which affected not only body but mind. And as every act of the exhausted body is hard and painful to perform, so every past and potential act seems to the exhausted spirit, which would fain weep over what it laughed at before; what formerly caused pleasure and joy now brings only grief and sorrow; the things but yesterday eagerly grasped now bring a craze that would tear the hair from its head, aye, even the whole head from its body. When this mood envelops the soul it is irresistible, and over all a man's thought and ideas it casts its sickly gleam.

While Uli, as long as the effect of the wine was upon him, had been angry with the master for his rebuke, now that its force was spent he became angry at himself for his debauch. He recalled the twenty-three farthings which he had gone through in one evening, and which would now take almost a fortnight's work to earn again. He was angry at the work which he would have to do for this purpose, at the wine which he had drunk, at the tavern-keeper who had furnished it, and so on. He lost all sense, forgot everything, did everything wrong. He was uncomfortable, discontented with himself, hence also with all others, with the whole world; he had good words for none, and nothing suited him. He imagined that the mistress was intentionally cooking poor meals and preparing everything he didn't like; that the master was tormenting him with needless work; that the horses were all bad-tempered and that the cows purposely did everything they could to bother him — the stupidest cows that ever grazed on God's earth.

The farmer and his wife let the lad alone; it seemed as if they paid no heed to him. But it was not so. The mistress had once or twice remarked to her husband how wildly Uli was carrying on — she had never known him to be in such a state before. Had her husband spoken too sharply to him? But the farmer did not think so; Uli wasn't angry at him alone but at the whole world, he said — probably chiefly angry at himself and was letting it out on others.

On Sunday he would talk with him again. Things couldn't go on this way any longer; Uli would have to mend his ways or go. But he mustn't be too harsh, said the mistress. After all, Uli wasn't the worst in the world; they knew what he was, but they didn't know what they might get.

Chapter II

A QUIET SUNDAY IN A FINE FARMHOUSE

[This describes in detail the Sunday activities on the farm — churchgoing, visits from relatives, an afternoon walk, inspection of the crops and the cattle, a coffee party.]

Chapter III

A NOCTURNAL ADMONITION

After they had hung up the lantern out in the stable and bedded the horses, the master himself made a bed for the cow, which tramped restlessly back and forth and could not lie down for uneasiness, and then remarked that it might be an hour or two yet, and they would go out and sit on the bench and smoke a pipe; the cow would give warning when the time came.

It was a mild night, half spring, half summer. Few stars twinkled in the blue ocean above; a ringing shout, a distant wagon broke in at times upon the stillness of the night.

"Have you made up your mind now, Uli?" asked the master, when they were sitting on the bench before the stable.

Uli answered that he was still rather undecided, but his tone was no longer angry. He wouldn't take everything, but he shouldn't mind staying.

He had already adopted the generally accepted maxim, never to show eagerness lest the opponent draw an advantage from it. Hence the remarkable calm and cold-bloodedness in farmers, which diplomats should admire. But in its full extent and application it is a vicious policy, which causes unspeakable evil, estranges countless people, makes them appear enemies to one another, generates coldness

where generous zeal should be kindled, and results in an indifference which causes an involuntary goose-flesh to scamper up the back of every friend of goodness.

The master did not take the reply amiss, but said that he felt the same way. He had nothing against Uli; but things would have to change. He wanted to know who was in the wrong, and whether he couldn't say a word in his own house any more without getting cross words all the week and seeing a face sour enough to poison all America.

He couldn't help it, said Uli. To look cross was his style of friendliness, and if his face hadn't looked the same as usual it wasn't on his master's account, for he had no special complaint against him or anybody. But he was only a poor servant after all, and had no right to a home or any fun; he was on earth only to be unhappy, and whenever he tried to forget his misery and have a good time everybody got after him and tried to put him down. Whoever could shove him into misfortune, did so. Who could be expected to look sweet all the time?

He ought to see that he didn't want to shove him into misfortune — quite the contrary, said the master. If any one was doing that it was himself. When a lad went with bad girls he was the cause of his own misfortune, and no one else. "No, Uli," continued the master, "you must give up your loose living; you make yourself unhappy, and I won't have such vexation as you've caused me this week."

He hadn't done anything bad, Uli rejoined.

"Ho, ho," said the master; "I wonder whether getting full is something good."

Oh, there were much worse than he, said Uli, and there were lots of farmers that he couldn't hold a candle to.

He couldn't deny it, said the master, but a bad man didn't make the others good, and even if many a farmer was a drunkard or even a scoundrel, that didn't make Uli any better if he was a loafer and other things besides.

Well, a man surely ought to be allowed to have some fun,

said Uli; who'd want to live if he couldn't have any fun any more?

"But Uli, is it any fun if you don't want to see anybody for a week afterward, if you don't feel happy anywhere? Is it any fun if it can make you miserable and unhappy for the rest of your life? Such fun is the devil's bait. Of course you can have your fun; every man has a right to it, but in good and right ways. You can tell whether a man is good or bad by his enjoyment of good or bad things."

"Well, it's easy for you to crow," said Uli, "you've got the finest farm for miles around, your stables are full of good stock, you granaries full; you have a good wife — one of the best, and fine children; you can enjoy yourself, for you have things to enjoy; if I had 'em, I'd never think of sprees and wild living. But what have I got? I'm a poor lad, haven't a soul in the world that wishes me well; my father's dead, my mother too, and my sisters are all looking out for themselves. Misfortune's my lot in this world; if I get sick, nobody wants me, and if I die they'll bury me like a dog, and not a soul will cry over me. Oh, why don't they kill the like of me when we come into the world!" And with that, big strong Uli began to cry bitterly.

"Now, now, Uli," said the master, "you're not so badly off, if you'd only think so. Give up your wild life and you can be a man yet. Many a man has started with as little as you, and got house and farm and full stables."

Yes, said Uli, such things didn't happen any more, and then a man had to have more luck for that than he had.

"That's stupid talk," said the master; "how can a man talk of luck when he throws away and squanders all he gets his hands on? I never saw a coin yet that wasn't willing to leave the hand that spent it. But your mistake is just this — that you don't believe you could become a man. You think you're poor and will stay poor and are worth nothing, and so you stay poor. If you thought something different, things would go better. For everything still depends on what a man believes."

"But for goodness gracious sake, master," said Uli, "how should I get rich? Think how little my pay is, and how many clothes I need; and I have debts to boot. What's the use of saving? And can't I have any fun?"

"But for goodness gracious sake," echoed the master, "what are you coming to if you've got debts now, while you're strong and well and nobody to care for? You'll be a vagabond, and then nobody will want you any more; you'll earn less and less and need more and more. No, Uli, think it over a little; this can't go on. There's still time, and I tell you honestly it would be a pity."

"It's no use; what's the good of drudging and giving up all my fun? I shan't get anywhere; a poor lad like me can never be anything else," wailed Uli.

"See what the cow's doing," said the master. And when Uli came back with the reply that the calf was not coming just yet, the master said, "I shall remember all my life how our pastor explained serving in our religious teaching, and how he made it so clear that you had to believe him; and many a man has grown happy by doing so. He said that all men got from God two great funds to put out at interest — namely, powers and time. By good use of these we must win temporal and eternal life. Now, many a man has nothing to exercise his powers on, so as to use his time serviceably and profitably; so he lends his powers and his time to some one who has too much work, but too little time and powers, in return for a definite pay; that is called serving. But it was an unfortunate thing, he said, that most servants regarded this serving as a misfortune and their employers as their enemies or at least their oppressors; that they regarded it as an advantage to do as little as possible for them, to be able to waste as much time as possible in chattering, running, and sleeping; that they became unfaithful, for they withheld in this way from their masters what they had lent and sold to them — time. But as every disloyalty punished itself, so this also caused very direful consequences; for betrayal of the master was be-

trayal of oneself. Every action tended imperceptibly to form a habit which we could never get rid of. When a maid-servant or a man-servant had for years done as little as possible, worked as slowly as possible, always grumbled at each new task, and either run away, heedless of the outcome, or dawdled over it so that the very grass grew under their feet, had taken no pains with anything, spoiled as much as possible, never been careful but always indifferent to everything — this soon formed a habit, and after a while it couldn't be shaken off. Such a habit would be carried along into each employment, and if in time independence came and marriage, then who had to bear these habits — laziness, sloth, insubordination, discontent? The man himself had to bear them and all their consequences, distress and calamity, until death, through death, and before God's judgment seat. He told us to look and see how many thousands were a burden to their fellows and an offense to God, dragging themselves around as repulsive creatures, visible witnesses to the thoughtful, how unfaithfulness punishes itself.

"But as a man formed a habit by his acts, so also he made a name for himself among others. For this name, for his reputation or esteem among men, every man worked from childhood to the grave; every little act, yes, every single word, contributed to this name. This name opens or closes hearts to us, makes us worthy or unworthy, desired or rejected. However humble a man, he has his name, and his fellows judge his value to them by it. So every man-servant and maid-servant involuntarily creates a name, and the amount of their wages is determined by it; it opens a way to them or closes it. Then it's no use for a man to make long speeches and complain about former employers; that won't give him a good name, for his actions have already given him a bad one. His reputation would be known for miles around, one scarcely knew how. This name was a wonderful thing, and yet people gave much too little thought to it, especially those with whom it was only

second in importance to their habits of mind; with these two things they wished to gain a third, a good living in the world, wealth; and a fourth — Heaven and its treasures. What a wretched wight he was, then, who had bad habits and a bad name, and who was losing Heaven and earth!

"And so, the pastor continued, every man who went into service ought to look on it not as slavery, nor the master as his enemy; but as schooling, and the master as a blessing from God; for what should the poor do — i. e., those who had but time and powers (and that was much after all), if no one would give them work and pay. They should regard their time of service as an opportunity to accustom themselves to work and industry and make a good name for themselves among men. According as they were true to the master they were true to themselves, and as the master profited by them they profited themselves. They should never think that only the master gained advantage from their industry; they gained at least as much from it. Then, even if they came to a bad master, they should by no means plan to punish him by bad behavior; they would only injure themselves thereby, inwardly and outwardly. Now when a servant worked better and better, was increasingly faithful and capable, that was his own possession which nobody could take from him, and in addition he had his good name. People would like him and intrust much to him, and the world would be open to him. Let him undertake what he would, he would find good people to help him because his good name was the best security. We should stop and think what servants men commended — the faithful or the unfaithful; and which among them attained property and respect.

" Then the pastor said a third thing, and that touches you especially. He said that men wanted to have pleasure and ought to have it, especially in their youth. Now when a servant hated his service and found work disagreeable, he would desire some special pleasures and so would begin

to idle, to run wild, to take part in bad affairs, and finally would take delight in these things and meditate upon them day and night. But if maid or man had seen the light, realized that they might come to something, and had faith in themselves, then they would love their work, would take pleasure in learning something, in doing something well; pleasure in success at something, in the growth of what they had planted, what they had fed. They would never say, 'What do I care about this? What business is that of mine? I get nothing out of it.' No, they would take genuine pleasure in doing something unusual, undertaking something hard; thus their powers would best grow, thus they would make the best name for themselves. So they would take delight in their master's business, in his horses, cows, corn, grass, as if they were their own. 'Of that in which a man delights doth he think; where the treasure is, there is the heart also,' said the pastor. Now if the servant has his mind on his service, if he is filled with the desire to become a thoroughly capable man in the eyes of God and men, then the devil has little power over him, cannot suggest evil things to him, wicked thoughts for him to think continually, so that he hasn't his mind on his work but is drawn from one vice to another and is ruined in soul and body. Those were the pastor's words," concluded the master; "it seems as if it was today that he spoke them to us, and I have seen a hundred times over that he was right. I thought I'd tell it to you; it just fits your case. And if you'd only think so, you could be one of the finest lads in the world and have just the kind of life you want."

Chapter IV

How the ears of a servant are opened to a good master

Uli's answer was cut off by the cow, which proclaimed her pangs more clearly: now there was work to do, and the conversation could not be continued. All went well, and finally there was a handsome calf, coal-black with a

white star, such as neither had ever seen; it was decided to raise it. Uli was twice as active and attentive as usual, and the little calf he treated quite gently, almost tenderly, and regarded it with real affection.

When they were done with the cow and she had had her onion soup, the morning was already dawning, and no time was left to continue their conversation.

The ensuing work-days engrossed them with various labors and the master was frequently absent on business in the neighborhood, so that they had no further talk together. But it seemed to be assumed by both that Uli was to remain, and when the master came home his wife could not praise Uli enough, saying how well he had performed his duty and that she had not had to give him any orders; he had thought of everything himself, and when she had thought of it it had already been done. This naturally pleased the master very much and caused him to speak with increasing kindness to Uli and to show more and more confidence in him. Nothing is more vexatious for a master than to come home in the evening tired or sleepy and find everything at sixes and sevens and his wife full of complaints; to see only half the work done that should have been accomplished, much of it botched and ruined, so that it had better have been let alone; and then into the bargain to hear his wife complain half the night how the servants had been unruly, had given impudent answers, and done just what they pleased, and how she hated to have it so — and if he ever went away again she would run off too. It is terrible for a man who has to go away (and the necessity arises occasionally) if the heavy sighs begin on the homeward road, as soon as he can see his house. What has happened today, he thinks — what shall I see and hear? And so he scarcely wants to go home at all; and whereas he would like to return with love and joy, he has to march with thunder and lightning into his rebellious realm.

In Uli something new had awakened and was filling his whole frame, without his rightly knowing it as yet. As

time went on he had to think more and more of the master's words, and more and more he began to believe that the master was right. It was grateful to him to think that he was not created to remain a poor despised lad, but might yet become a man. He saw that wild ways would not bring him to that, and that the more he persisted in them the more ground he would lose. He was strangely affected by what the master had said about habits, and about the good name that one could get in addition to his pay, and so keep on earning more and more the more faithfully he worked; and how one could not look better to his own interest than by being very faithful in the service of his master.

He found himself less and less ready to deny that it was so. More and more examples kept occurring to him of bad servants who had become unhappy and remained poor, and on the other hand he remembered how he had heard others praised by their old employers, who told how they had had a good man or maid, and how these had done well and were now well off.

Only one thing he could not understand — how he, Uli, should ever come to money, to wealth; that seemed absolutely impossible to him. His pay was thirty crowns in cash, that is, seventy-five francs; also two shirts and a pair of shoes. Now he still had debts of almost four crowns and had already drawn much pay. Heretofore he had never been able to keep within his income; and now he was to pay debts and save, and that seemed impossible to him, for in the natural course of things he was prepared to see his debts increase each year. Of the thirty crowns he needed at least ten for clothes, and even then he could not dress very elegantly; for stockings, shoes, shirts, of which he had only three good and four poor ones, washing, etc., at least eight crowns would go; a packet of tobacco every week (and he generally used more) made two crowns more; that left ten crowns. Now there were fifty Saturday nights, fifty Sunday afternoons, six of which were dance-Sundays at that; nobody knew how

many market-days; then there was a review, perhaps even a quartering of soldiers, not counting all the chance occasions for a lark, such as weddings, shooting, bowling, the newly fashionable masquerades, and evening parties, the most dangerous of all evil customs. Independence Day, which degenerates into a perfect orgy of debauchery, was not then in vogue. Now if he figured only two pence a week for brandy or wine, that made four crowns again. If he skipped three dance-Sundays, still he needed at least a crown if he was to pay the fiddler, have a girl, and, as was customary, go home full; and often he needed a thirty-fiver for each of the other three Sundays. Now for the market-days, reviews, and other sprees he had only three crowns left. With this, he thought, it was really humanly impossible to get along; two markets and the review alone would use up more than that; so he had nothing at all for the rest. He figured it over and over, tried to cut down on clothes, on other expenses; but it couldn't be done. He had to be clothed and have washing done; nor could he run barefoot. And so, let him figure as he would, he always came to the sad result that, instead of putting by, he would be falling behind.

One day soon after this calculation master and man were hauling stones for a new stove. On the homeward way they stopped at an inn, for they had a long and hilly road. Since the master was not so niggardly as to order the poorest wine when the servant was with him, and only a halfpence worth of bread for the two, Uli became talkative as they proceeded. "Listen, master," said Uli, "I have been thinking that the pastor who gave you your instruction wasn't altogether a fool; but he didn't know anything about what pay a farmer lad gets and what he needs; I suppose he thought it was about as much as a vicar's pay. But you ought to know better, and that saving and getting rich are no go. I've spent many a day in figuring, till I was like to burst the top of my head off; but I always got the same result: nothing comes of nothing, and zero from zero is zero."

"Why, how did you figure?" asked the master.

Uli went through the whole account again for him, and when he was done he asked the master mockingly, "Now, what do you say to that? Isn't it so?"

The master said, "By your account, to be sure; but there's a very different way of reckoning, my lad. Here now, I'll figure it up for you my way; I wonder what you'll say to it.

"I won't change much what you put down for clothes. It's possible that if you want to keep yourself in good condition, and in particular to have shirts that will save washing, and to look as a self-respecting lad likes to look on Sundays and work-days, you'll need even more at first. But for tobacco you've put down two crowns, and that's too much. A man that has to go into the stable and on the barn-floor ought not to smoke all day, not till after working hours. You don't need to smoke to offset your hunger on my place, and if you could get out of the habit altogether it would help you a lot. When a man doesn't smoke he always increases his wages.

"The other ten crowns that you put down for amusements of all kinds I'll strike out, every one. Yes, open your mouth and look at me like a stork at a new roof. If you want to cure yourself and come to something, you've got to make some decent resolution at the outset — a resolution not to squander a single penny of your pay in any way. If you resolve simply to go gallivanting a little less often, to spend a little less than before, that's just throwing your money to the winds. Once in the tavern, you're no longer master of yourself; the old companionship, the old habit will carry you along, and you'll spend two or three weeks' pay again. Then the after-thirst will come and you'll have to improve other evenings, and more and more you'll lose all belief that you could ever help yourself up, you'll become slacker every day, and you'll despair of yourself more and more. Besides, it's not so dreadful as the face you make up. See how many people never take a glass the year round, or

go into a tavern. It's not only poor day-laborers, who have all they can do to keep off the parish, but some of them are well-to-do, even rich people, who've made it a habit never to spend anything uselessly, and they are not only contented but can much less understand how a reasonable man can enjoy idling than you are willing to understand me when I say a man can live without idling."

"I walked home once with a little man from the Langental market. He was surprised to find me going home so early; usually he had to go home alone, he said. I answered that I hadn't had anything more to do, and that I didn't care to sit in the tavern till evening; that it cost money and time, and a man didn't know when and how he would finally get home. He felt the same way, he said. He had begun with nothing and barely got along. For a long time he had supported father and mother alone, but now he had his home and farm paid for and every year two cows to sell, and not one of them under six hundred pounds. but he had never wasted a cent from the very beginning. Only once, he remembered, in Burgdorf he had bought a roll for a halfpenny without needing to — he could have stood it till he got home, and had a cheaper meal there. Well, I told him I couldn't say as much; many a penny I had wasted. But one could overdo it, too, for a man had to live. 'Yes, to be sure,' said he. 'I live too, and am happy. A farthing saved gives me more satisfaction than another man gets from spending a crown. If I hadn't begun that way I'd never have come to anything. A poor lad doesn't know enough to stop at the right time when once he begins; when he's thrown away one penny it pulls a dozen along after it. But you mustn't think I'm a miserable miser. Many a man has gone away empty-handed from the big farm-houses and has got what he needed from me. I didn't forget who has blessed my work and will soon demand an account from me.' At this I looked the little man up and down with great respect; nobody could have told what was in him from his looks. Before we separated

I wanted to buy him a bottle of wine for his good advice. But he refused; he didn't need anything, and whether he squandered my money or his would come to the same thing on that future account. Since then I've never seen him; probably he's gone to his account by now, and if nobody had a worse one than he many a man would be better off.

"So this is my opinion: every single farthing of your pay that you spend for such useless things is ill spent. Stay at home, and you'll save not merely ten crowns, but a lot besides. All the servants complain how many shoes and clothes they need, when they have to be out in wind and weather; but do you know how most of their clothes are spoiled? By running around at night in all kinds of weather, through thick and thin, and with all that goes on then. If you wear your clothes twenty-four hours, you evidently use 'em up more than if it was only fourteen. You don't go calling in wooden shoes, and do you burst out more shoe-nails by day, or by night when you can't see the stones, the holes, or the ditches? And tell me, how do your Sunday clothes look after you've stumbled around in them drunk, pulled each other about, and rolled in the mud? How many a Sunday jacket has been torn to pieces, the trousers ruined, the hat lost!

"Many a man would surely need less for his clothes if he stayed at home; I say nothing about the girls. And think, Uli, if you need ten crowns now for such useless habits, in ten years you'll need twenty and in twenty forty, if you have them; for a habit like that doesn't stand still — it grows. And doesn't that lead straight as a string to your old ways?

"Finally, Uli, you get not only thirty crowns, but also many a penny in the way of tips when a cow or a horse is sold, and the like. Use those when you must have an outing and can't give up the tavern. Out of that money you can drink a glass or two at a review, if you like, or put it by against your going into garrison; there'll be plenty for that. You've drawn a lot of your pay; but if you'll

believe me and follow my advice you can get out of debt this year; and next year you can start laying by. And if you believe me, I don't say that I can pay you only thirty crowns. When a servant attends to his business and doesn't have his mind set simply on foolishness; when I can intrust something to him and things go the same whether I'm with him or not, so that I don't have to come home every time in anxiety lest something has gone wrong — then I won't haggle over a crown or two. Think of that, Uli: the better the habits, the better the name, the better the pay."

At these words Uli's mouth opened and his nose lifted, and at last he said that that would be fine, but it probably would never happen; he didn't think he could stand it.

"Well, try it a month and see how it goes; and don't think about gadding, drinking, and the tavern, and you can do it all right."

Chapter V

NOW COMES THE DEVIL AND SOWS TARES AMONG THE GOOD SEED

[Uli's fellow-servants, on his master's farm and on the neighboring ones, attempt to drag him back into his old ways, chiefly with ridicule and mockery. At times his resolution fails him, but he masters himself again. Then a bad-hearted neighbor, who hates Uli's master, tries to lure him away from his new faith. He praises Uli to the skies, tells him he is not properly appreciated, and poisons his mind against his master. Uli grows more and more puffed-up, and is about ready to be caught in the neighbor's snare; for the latter merely wishes to use him for his own selfish ends.]

Chapter VI

HOW THE WEEDS WERE UPROOTED FROM ULI

[A neighboring village, Brandywine, is to play a championship game of *hurnuss* (a kind of ball game played in spring and autumn in the canton of Bern), with Uli's village, Potato Hollow. There is deep enmity between the

two places, and the contest is likely to be bitter. The losing team must give the winners a full dinner, with plenty of wine. Uli's master urges him to refuse the invitation to play on the team; but the malicious neighbor talks him over. Though the Potato Hollowers use all their skill and cunning, even to cheating the umpire, they lose the game by one point; they must set up the dinner, which ends in a free fight. A victory in this comforts Potato Hollow somewhat. But two of the Brandywiners claim damages, and the local players are afraid of severe judgment if it comes to trial, it being not the first offense. They agree to a plan, devised by the malicious neighbor, to let the entire penalty fall on Uli's head, so that they can go scot-free. Uli is to confess himself the guilty party, and in return for this service the others, all wealthy farmers' sons, will reimburse him for all expenses and give him a handsome bonus besides. Uli's master overhears his neighbor talking to Uli, decides to interfere, and points out to him the noose into which he is running his head. He advises Uli to demand a written promise, signed by all, that they will do what has been agreed upon. Uli brings home the written promise and shows it to his master; it turns out to be nothing but a certificate that Uli is the guilty party. Uli is in consternation; but the master promises to help him out if he will abide by his word in the future. Accordingly, Johannes meets the scheming neighbor and advises him to have the other players settle up and leave Uli in peace, or else Uli may have occasion to show the paper to the governor. Uli hears nothing more about the affair.]

Chapter VII

How the Master Kindles a Fire for the Good Seed

[The author points out the disastrous consequences of giving the servants on a farm only unheated rooms to live in, and no access to the warm house; on Sundays they seek warmth in the public-houses or elsewhere, and terrible im-

morality results. Uli feels the need of a warm room to sit in, and the master invites him into the house. The maids are at first much put out, and the mistress too; but the master upholds Uli, and gradually the new custom wins favor and results in a betterment of all the servants.]

Chapter VIII

A SERVANT BECOMES PROSPEROUS AND SOON THE SPECULATORS APPEAR

[Uli becomes quite settled in steady habits, and soon has a nice little sum of money in hand. But others get wind of it, and they borrow various sums of him, promising to pay back at a certain time with interest. Soon Uli's money is all gone, but he exults in the thought of his interest. When the time for payment comes the debtors make excuses; and as time goes on and no money is forthcoming, Uli becomes anxious. At length the master notices his distress, finds out the trouble, and helps him to recover most of what he had lent, admonishing him hereafter to put his savings in the bank.]

Chapter IX

ULI GAINS PRESTIGE AND IMPRESSES GIRLS

[Uli's improvement proceeds steadily, and his self-respect with it. The two maids are greatly impressed by him, and both set their caps for him. Stini, the elder, is very ugly and cross-grained, but a good worker and very thrifty. Yrsi, on the other hand, is pretty and sweet-tempered, but lazy and heedless, and wants a husband so as to avoid working. Jealously the two watch each other's attempts to catch Uli, who is drawn now to Yrsi's prettiness, now to Stini's thrift. Their jealousy finally becomes so furious that Uli begins to cool off, which only makes them the more eager. Yrsi plans a master-stroke: she uncovers the liquid manure-pit, and Stini tumbles into it. When she is finally hauled out, not without difficulty and amid the gibes of the other servants, she falls like a tigress upon her rival, and the two roll in the dirt and become such a reeking

ball of filth that no one ventures to touch them to pull them apart. But Uli has had enough of them both and is entirely cured, though not of his desire for marriage.]

Chapter X

HOW ULI SELLS A COW AND ALMOST GETS A WIFE

[Uli is sent to market with a cow, which he sells at a good profit. On the way home he encounters the daughter of a neighbor, struggling with four little pigs. She begs his assistance, and as they go along she gives him a glowing account of her father's prosperity and the size of her dowry. She invites him into a tavern on the way, and they take some refreshment together. Then she goes on about herself — how strong she is, and how much work she can do, and what a good catch she would make. Uli cannot get in a word edgewise, but is mightily impressed by her imposing vigor and her father's wealth, so that he goes home with his head in a whirl. The master and his wife are pleased with Uli's success, and the master hands over to Uli the profit he has made on the cow. Uli asks the master about the neighbor's Katie, saying that he thinks she would have him. The master, however, strongly dissuades him, pointing out that Katie might make a good field-hand, but not a good wife. She can make hay, but not soup; and there is not so much wealth, for the farm is badly managed. The boys will get the land, and the girls can take the leavings, which will not amount to very much. Besides, the girls are spoiled and will not know what to do on a small farm, after being used to a big one; and if Uli stays there he will simply be a servant without pay. Uli sees that the master is right, and decides to think no more of the matter.]

Chapter XI

HOW DESIRES TAKE FORM IN A SERVANT, AND HOW A GOOD MASTER REALIZES THEM

[Uli gradually reaches something like perfection, and his savings amount to a handsome sum. But the money seems to come too slowly, and he begins to feel impatient.

The master is at first vexed, but sees that he must either pay Uli what will satisfy him, or let him go. Uli suggests buying or renting something, but the master will not hear to it; Uli has too little money for that. Then one autumn the master goes to market and encounters there a cousin, Joggeli, who has come, he says, to see Johannes. Joggeli tells his troubles: he and his wife are getting old and decrepit, and can no longer look after their large farm as formerly. Their son Johannes has become too stuck-up for the farm and now runs a tavern; their daughter is good for nothing, incompetent and lazy. The overseer whom he has had for eleven years has been cheating him right and left, and the other servants are hand in glove with him. Joggeli desires a new overseer, a first-class man on whom he can depend; he would pay as high as a hundred crowns if he could find what he wants. Johannes recommends Uli, and Joggeli comes to have a look at him. He does his best to find some fault in him, but can discover none. Johannes and his wife are both reluctant to let Uli go, but they think it is for his good, and so Uli is induced to hire out to Joggeli for sixty crowns, two pairs of shoes, four shirts, and tips. All hearts are heavy as New Year's approaches, when the change is to be made. The master himself plans to drive Uli over to his new place.]

Chapter XII

How Uli leaves his old place and reaches his new one

On the following morning the sleigh was made ready and the box fastened on it, and Uli had to breakfast with the family in the living-room — coffee, cheese, and pancakes. When the horse was harnessed Uli could scarcely go, and when at last the time came, and he stretched out his hand to his mistress and said, "Good-bye, mother, and don't be angry with me," the tears rushed to his eyes again; and the mistress had to lift her apron to her eyes, saying, "I don't know what for; I only hope you'll get along well.

But if you don't like it come back any time, the sooner the better." The children would scarcely let him go; it seemed as if his heart would break when the master finally told them to let loose, that they must start if they wanted to get there today, and it wouldn't be the last time they were to see each other; but that now there was no help for it. When they drove away the mistress kept wiping her eyes for a long time, and had to comfort the children, who, it seemed, could not stop weeping and lamenting.

In silence the two men drove over the gleaming snow. "Steady!" the master had to say occasionally, when the wild Blazer struck into a gallop, pulling the light sleigh along like the wind and kicking the snow high in the air. "It distresses me," said Uli, "and more and more, the nearer we get; it's so hard for me! I can't believe that I'm not running into misfortune; it seems as if it was right ahead of me."

"That's natural," said the master, "and I wouldn't take that as a bad omen. Think: nearly ten years ago, when you were a ne'er-do-well and I started you going right, how hard it was for you to do better, and how little faith you had in the possibility that everything would turn out right. But still it did, gradually. Your faith got stronger, and now you're a lad that can be said to have won his battle. So don't be distressed; what you've got before you now is all the easier for it, and the worst thing that can happen is that you'll come back to me in a year. Just keep yourself straight and watch out, for my cousin is terribly suspicious; but once he's taken your measure, you can put up with him. You'll have the worst time with the other servants; go easy with them, little by little, and in kindness as long as you can; then if that's no good, speak right up so that you'll know where you are—I wouldn't like a year of that sort of thing myself."

It was a bright, clear January day as they drove through handsome fields, then between white fences and glittering trees, toward Slough Farm. This property lay perhaps

ten minutes' walk from Uefligen, was over a hundred acres in size and very fruitful, but not all in one piece; some fields and one grass-meadow lay at some distance. In wet years it might be swampy in spots, but that could be managed. As they drove up, Joggeli came stumping on a stick around the house, which stood on rather low ground, and said that he had been looking for them for a long time, and had almost thought they weren't coming; he had become impatient. He shouted toward the barns, which were built against the house, for some one to come and take the horse. No one came. Uli himself had to unhitch and asked where to take Blazer. "Why, is nobody here?" Nobody came. Then the old man went angrily to the stable and pulled the door open, and there was the carter calmly currying horses. "Don't you hear when you're called?" cried Joggeli.

"I didn't hear anything."

"Then prick up your ears and come and take the horse."

He'd have to make room for it first, growled the fellow, and shot in among his horses like a hawk in a pigeon-house, so that they dashed at their mangers and kicked, and Uli only by constant "Whoas" and at risk of life got Blazer into the last stall. There he could find no halter for a time.

"Should have brought one," was the carter's remark.

When Uli went back to the sleigh and untied his box, the wood-cutters were to help him carry it; but for a long time none stirred. Finally they dispatched the boy, who let the handle go when they were on the stairs, so that Uli almost tumbled down backward and only owed it to his strength that he did not. The room to which he was shown was not bright, was unheated, and provided with two beds. He stood in it somewhat depressed, until they called to him to come down and get something warm to eat. Outside, a cheerful, pretty girl received him, nutbrown of hair and eyes, red and white as to cheeks, with kissable lips, blinding white teeth, tall and strong, yet slender in build, with a serious face behind which lurked both mischief and good nature.

And over the whole lay that familiar, but indescribable Something, that always testifies to inward and outward purity, to a soul which hates the unclean and whose body therefore never becomes unclean, or never seems so even in the dirtiest work. Freneli — this was the girl's name — was a poor relation, who had never had a home and was always treated like Cinderella, but always shook off the ashes — a girl who was never dimmed outwardly or inwardly, but met God and men and every new day with fresh and merry laughter, and hence found a home everywhere and made a place for herself in all hearts, however they might try to resist her; therefore she was often dearly loved by her relatives even while they fancied they hated her, casting her out because she was the offspring of an illicit intercourse between an aristocratic relative and a day-laborer. Freneli had not opened the door. When Uli came out the brown eyes rapidly swept over him, and quite seriously Freneli said, "I suppose you're the new overseer; they want you to come down and get something warm to eat." There was no need, said Uli, they had eaten something on the way.

None the less he followed the fleet girl to the living-room in silence. In it Joggeli and Johannes were already sitting at the table, half hidden by smoking meat, both fresh and salted, sauerkraut and dried pears. A plump, friendly old woman came to meet him, wiped her hand on her apron, held it out to him, and said, "Are you the new overseer? Well, well, if you're as good as you are handsome, it'll be all right, I don't doubt. Sit down and eat, and don't be bashful; the food's there to be eaten."

On the stove bench there sat yet another form, lean, with a white face and pale, lustreless eyes; she acted as if she were paying no heed to anything, but had a pretty box before her, and was winding blue silk from one ball to another. Joggeli was telling about the time he had had with the last overseer, and what he had had to stand since then, and how it seemed to him that it had been much worse than he could

remember now. "All the torment such a fellow can make you, and you can't string him up for it—it's not right, I swear. It didn't use to be so; there was a time when they hanged everybody that stole as much as would pay for the rope. That was something like, but all that's changed. It's enough to make you think the bad folks have nothing but their own kind in the government, the way it lets 'em get away. Why, we don't even hang the women that poison their husbands any more. Now, I'd like to know what's worse, to break the law by killing somebody, or by letting him live; it looks to me as if one was as bad as the other. And then it seems to me that if those who ought to maintain the law are the ones to break it, they deserve no forgiveness of God or men. Then I think we ought to have the right to put 'em where they belong, instead of having to pay 'em besides."

During this long speech of Joggeli's, which he fortunately delivered inside his four walls, as otherwise it might easily have brought down upon him an action for high treason, his wife kept constantly saying to Johannes and especially to Uli, "Take some more, won't you, that's what it's for; or don't you like it? We give what we've got—it's bad enough; but at least we don't grudge it to you. (Joggeli, do fill up the glasses; look, they're empty.) Drink, won't you, there's more where that came from. Our son gave us the wine; they say it's good; he bought it himself down in Italy; it actually cost fivepence halfpenny the quart, and not too full a quart at that." When Uli did not wish to take any more the old woman still kept putting food before him, stuck the fork into the largest pieces and then thrust them off on his plate with her thumb, saying, "Ho, you're a fine fellow if you can't get that down too; such a big lad must eat if he wants to keep his strength, and we're glad to give it to him; whoever wants to work has got to eat. Take some more, do."

But at last Uli really could eat nothing more, took up his cap, prayed, and stood up to go. "Stay awhile," said

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A NEW CITIZEN

BENJAMIN VAUTIER

Joggeli; "where are you going? They'll look after your Blazer, I gave 'em strict orders."

"Oh, I'd like to go out and look around a bit and see how I like it," said Uli.

"Go then; but come back when you get cold; you're not to work today, do you hear," said the mother.

"He'll have something to live through," said Joggeli, "they hate like poison to have him come, and I think the carter would have liked to be overseer. But I don't care if they are against each other. It's never good to have the servants on too good terms; it always comes out of the master."

"Ho," said Johannes, "that's as you take it. If the servants are on one side and the master on the other, then he has a hard time and can't do anything. But when the servants are all against each other, and each one does his best to vex the others, and one won't help another — that's bad for the master too; for after all in the end everything hits the master and his interests. I think it's a true saying that peace prospers, discord destroys. I don't just like it here. Nobody came to take the horse; nobody wanted to help Uli with his box; each one does as he likes, and they don't fear anybody. Cousin, that won't be good. I must tell you, Uli won't stay here under those conditions. If he's to be overseer and have the responsibility, he wants order too; he won't let 'em all do as they please. Then there'll be a fuss; it will all come back on him, and if you don't back him up he'll run off. Let me say frankly: I told him that if he couldn't stand it here any longer, he was to come back to me, that I'd always have room for him. We're sorry enough to lose him, and the wife cried when I went off with him, as if it was her own child."

That seemed very lovely to the old mother and she wiped her own eyes just from hearing about it, and said, "Have no fear, Cousin Johannes, he shan't have a hard time with us; we know how to look after him, too. I am sure that if we've only found some one at last that we can trust and that takes an interest in things, no pay will seem too high."

"Cousin," said Johannes, "pay isn't everything; you must back Uli up and you must trust him. We've treated him almost like our own child, and he'd feel very strange if he was to be nothing but a servant."

"Oh," said the mother, "don't be anxious, Johannes, we'll do all we can. When we make coffee for ourselves in between meals, it can't be but he shall have a cup of it. And we have our piece of meat every day, but the servants only on Sunday. What would become of us if we gave 'em meat every day? But if you think best we'll see to it that Uli gets a piece of meat every now and then."

"Cousin," said Johannes, "that's not the thing, and Uli doesn't want it either, for it only makes the others envious. No matter how you do it, they find it out just the same. We had a maid once that used to smell of all the pots when she came in from the field, and she always guessed when coffee had been given to the other servants; and then she used to sulk for a week, so that you could hardly stand it. No, you must have confidence in him and help him; then it'll be all right."

Joggeli did not want the conversation to continue and took Johannes around through stables and granary, as long as it was light. He asked for advice and got it, but Johannes would praise nothing. Of the calves he said that they ought to be looked to, for they had lice; and of the sheep that they were too cramped for room, that they would squeeze each other and the lambs would be ruined. For the rest, the inspection was made in silence. On the way back they found Uli standing gloomily in the front shed and took him in with them; but he remained downcast the whole evening—indeed on the verge of tears whenever any one spoke to him.

On the following morning Johannes made ready for his return, after having had to eat beyond his capacity and drink a nip of brandy on top of it, although he said he never did so in the morning. Uli almost clung to his coat like a child that fears its father will run away from it; and when

he started to give him his hand, Uli said he would drive a piece with him if he might; he didn't know when he should see him again.

"And how do you like it?" asked Johannes, as soon as they were away from the house.

"Oh, master, I can't tell you how I feel. I've been in a lot of places, but I never saw anything like that. So help me God, there's no order in the place anywhere. The liquid manure runs into the stable; they've never cleaned out the dung properly, the horses' hind feet are higher than the forefeet; half the grain is in the straw; the loft is like a pig-sty; the tools aren't fit to be seen. The men all look at me as if they'd like to eat me. Either they give me no answer, or they give me impudent ones, so that I feel as if I'd have to punch their heads."

"Be patient and calm yourself," said Johannes. "Begin slowly, take the helm little by little, do all you can yourself, speak pleasantly, and try to bring 'em around gradually or at least get some on your side. Then wait awhile and see how things go, until you're familiar with everything, so that you can tell the best way to take hold. It's no good to rush right in at the start; usually one doesn't know his business well enough and takes hold of it at the wrong end. Then when you know how you stand, and if things don't get any better, sail into 'em good and proper, let 'em know where they stand with you, and force one or two of 'em to leave; you'll see an improvement right away. And be of good cheer; you're no slave, and you can go when you will. But it's a good apprenticeship for you, and the more a young man has to stand the better for him. You can learn a lot—even to be master, and that takes more skill than you think. But I keep feeling that you can make your fortune at it and make a proper man of yourself. Get on good terms with the women-folk, but not so as to make the old man suspicious; if you can get on their good side, you've won a lot. But if they keep inviting you away from your work to drink coffee with 'em, don't go; stay with the

others. And always be the first one in the work; then they'll have to give in at last, willing or not."

This put Uli on his feet. He found new courage; but still he could hardly leave the master. A number of things came into his mind, about which he ought to ask; it seemed as if he knew nothing. He asked about the sowing, and how he had best do this or that; whether this plant grew here, and how that one should be raised. There was no end to his questions, until finally Johannes stopped at an inn, drank another bottle with him, and then almost drove him off home.

Encouraged, Uli finally set off, and now for the first time felt his importance to the fullest extent. He was somebody, and his eyes saw quite differently, as he now set foot on the farm that was to get its rightful attention from him alone. With quite a different step he approached the house where he was, in a sense, to govern, and where they were waiting for him as a rebellious regiment awaits its new colonel.

Chapter XIII

How Uli instals himself as overseer

Calmly, with resolution taken, he joined the workers; it was afternoon, shortly after dinner. They were threshing by sixes. The milker and carter were preparing fodder; these he joined and helped. They did not need him, they said, and could do it alone.—He couldn't do anything on the threshing-floor, he said, until they started to clear up, and so today he would help them prepare fodder and manure. They grumbled; but he took hold and with his wonted adroitness mixed the fodder and shook the dust from it, and so silently forced the others to work better than usual. Below in the passage he shook out the fodder again, and made the fodder piles so fine and even along the walls, sweeping up with the broom the path between the horse-fodder and the cow-fodder, that it was a pleasure to see him. The milker said that if they did it that way

every day, they couldn't prepare in two days what the stock would eat in one. That depended, said Uli, how one was accustomed to prepare, and according to how the stock treated the fodder.

When they went at the manure he had his troubles with the milker, who wanted to take only the coarsest stuff off the top, as it were the cream from the milk. It was nice and warm outside, said Uli, and the stock wouldn't get cold; they would work thoroughly this time. And indeed it was necessary, for there was old stuff left that almost required the mattock before they could get to the stone floor of the stable. But there was no time left to dig out between the stones. They had to dip out the manure-pit, for the liquid was rising and almost reached the back of the stable; and only with difficulty could he get them to carry what they dipped out into the courtyard and not pour it into the road. When the manure was outside no one wanted to spread it, and the answer he got to his question was that they had no time today; they must soon fodder; it would be time enough in the morning.— It could easily be done during the foddering, said Uli, and the dung must be spread while still warm, especially in winter. Once frozen, it wouldn't settle any more and one would get no manure from it. With that he went at it himself, and the two men calmly let him work and made fun of him behind the stable-doors and in the fodder-passage.

In the house they had long since begun to wonder that the new overseer did not come home, and to fear that he might have driven off and away. Joggeli had sat down at the window from which he could see the road, almost looked his eyes out, and began to scold: he hadn't thought Johannes was as bad as that, and here he was his cousin, too, and such a trick *he* wouldn't play on the merest stranger; but nowadays one couldn't place reliance upon anybody, not even one's own children.

While he was in his best vein, Freneli came in and said, "You can look a long time; the new man's out there spread-

ing the manure they've taken out; he probably thinks it's better not to let it pile up. If nobody else will do it he probably thinks he must do it himself."

"Why doesn't he show himself when he comes home?" said Joggeli; and "Good gracious, why doesn't he come to supper?" said the mother. "Go and tell him to come in at once, we're keeping something warm for him."

"Wait," said Joggeli, "I'll go out myself and see how he's doing it and what's been done."

"But make him come," said the mother; "I think he must have got good and hungry."

Joggeli went out and saw how Uli was carefully spreading the manure and thoroughly treading it down; that pleased him. He wanted to look for the milker and the carter, to show them how Uli was doing it and to tell them to do it so in the future; he looked into the fodder-passage and could not take his eyes from it for a long time, as he saw the handsome, round, appetizing fodder-piles and the clean path between them. He looked into the stable, and as he saw the cows standing comfortably in clean straw and no longer on old manure he too felt better, and so he now went to Uli and told him that it had not really been the intention that he should do all the dirty work himself; that was other people's business. He had had the time for it, said Uli; there was no place for him in the threshing, and so he had done this in order to show how he wanted it done in the future. Joggeli wanted to bid him come in; but Uli said he would first like to watch the cleaning up after the threshing; he wanted to see how they did it. There he saw that the men simply thought of getting through quickly. The grain was poorly threshed; a number of ears could still be seen; it was winnowed still worse. The grain in the bin was not clean, so that he felt like emptying it and beginning the work over; however, he controlled himself and thought he would do it otherwise tomorrow.—But in the house Joggeli was saying that he liked the new man, for he knew his business; but he hoped he wouldn't boss too

much — he didn't like that. You couldn't do things in all places just alike, and by and by he wouldn't have any orders to give himself.

After supper Uli came to the master and asked him what was to be done during the winter; it seemed to him that the work should be so arranged that one should be all ready for the new work when the spring came.

Yes, said Joggeli, that might be good; but one couldn't do everything all at once; things had to take their time. The threshing would last about three weeks more; then they could begin to cut wood, and by the time they were through with that the spring would just about be at hand.

If he might say so, said Uli, it seemed to him that they ought to bring in the wood now. It was fine weather and the road good, so it would be twice as easy. In February the weather was generally bad and the ground soft; then you couldn't budge anything and ruined all the wagons.

That wouldn't do very well, thought Joggeli; it was not customary to begin threshing in February.

He hadn't meant that, said Uli. They should continue threshing. He and one more would cut down and get ready all the wood the carter could bring home, and until a load was ready the carter could help them in the woods.

Then they couldn't thresh by sixes any more, said Joggeli, if he took a man from the threshing, and when they all cut wood together they could do a lot in a short time.

"Well," said Uli, "as you will; but I thought this way: couldn't the milker help in the threshing during the morning and the afternoon, too, if the others help with the manure and the foddering at noon? And sometimes two can do more in the woods than a whole gang, when nobody wants to take hold."

"Yes," said Joggeli, "sometimes it goes that way; but let's let the wood go: the threshing's more pressing now."—

"As you will," said Uli, and went somewhat heavy-hearted to bed.

"Well, you are the queerest man," said the old woman

to her husband. "I liked what Uli said awfully well. It would have been to our advantage; and if those two fine gentlemen, the carter and the milker, don't have time to be drying their noses in the sun all day, it won't hurt 'em a bit, the scamps. Uli will be worth nothing to you, if you go on that way."

"But I won't take orders from a servant. If I let him do that he'd think nobody but he was to give orders. You've got to show 'em right from the start how you want to have things," grumbled Joggeli.

"Yes, you're the right one to show 'em; you spoil the good ones, and the bad ones you're afraid of and let 'em do as they please — that's your way," said his wife. "It's always been that way, and it isn't going to be any different now."

The next morning Uli told the mistress that one maid was superfluous on the threshing-floor, and she might keep for the house whichever she wanted. And Uli threshed through to the floor, and held his flail so that it touched his neighbor's and forced him to thresh the whole length of the grain to the wall; and when one section was done, the secondary tasks were quickly finished and they threshed again; and all this Uli effected not by words, but by the rapidity of his own work. In the house they remarked that it seemed as if they must have different flails for the threshing; these sounded quite different, and as if they went through to the floor. The maid who was released told Freneli how they were going to do for this fellow; he needn't think that he was going to start a new system, for they weren't going to let themselves be tormented by such a fellow. She was sorry for him; he was well-mannered and he certainly could work, she must admit. Everything he put his hands to went well. While they were threshing the carter had ridden off, ostensibly to the blacksmith. The milker had gone off with the cow, but without telling his errand. It was noon before either came back, and neither had worked a stroke.

After dinner Uli helped peel the remaining potatoes, as is customary in well-ordered households if time permits; the others ran out, scarcely taking time to pray. When Uli came out there was an uproar in the barn; two couples were wrestling on the straw of the last threshing, while the others looked on. He called to the milker to come quickly and take out the calves and look to them; probably they needed to be shorn and salved. The milker said that wasn't Uli's business; nobody was to touch his calves; they would be all right for a long while. And the carter stepped up to Uli, crying, "Shall we have a try at each other — if you dare?" Uli's blood boiled, for he saw that it was a put-up job; yet he could not well refuse. Sooner or later, he well knew, he would have to stand up to them and show his mettle. And so he said to himself, let it be now; then they would have his measure.

"Ho, if you want to try it, I'm willing," he replied, and twice running he flung the carter on his back so that the floor cracked. Then the milker said he would like to try too; to be sure, it was scarcely worth while to try falls with a walking-stick, with legs like pipe-stems and calves like fly-specks. With his brown hairy arms he grasped Uli as if he would pull him apart like an old rag. But Uli held his ground and the milker made no headway. He grew more and more angry, took hold with ever greater venom, spared neither arms nor legs, and butted with his head like an animal, until at last Uli had enough of it, collected all his strength, and gave him such a swing that he flew over the grain-pile into the middle of the floor and fell on the further side; there he lay with all fours in the air, and for a long time did not know where he was.

As if by chance Freneli had brought food for the hogs and had seen Uli's victory. In the house she told her godmother that she had seen something that tickled her. They had wanted to give Uli a beating; he had had to wrestle with them, but he was a match for them all. He had thrown the hairy milker on his back as if he had never

stood up. She was glad that he could manage them all; then they would be afraid of him and respect him. But Uli, interrupted in his examination of the calves, seized a flail and merely told the milker that he had no time for the calves today; they would look to them another day. The cleaning of the grain took more time than usual, and yet they were through quicker and the grain was better cleaned; but they had exerted themselves more, too, and in consequence had felt the cold less. When Uli told the master how much grain he had obtained, the latter said that they had never done so much this year and yet today they had been threshing the fallen grain.

In the evening, as they sat at table, the master came and said he thought it would be convenient to cut wood now; the horses weren't needed, the weather was fine, and it seemed to him that the threshing and the wood-cutting could go on together if properly arranged. The carter said the horses' hoofs were not sharpened; and another said that they couldn't go on threshing by sixes, but at most by fours, and would never get done. Uli said nothing.

Finally, when Joggeli had no further answers to give, and was out-talked by the servants, he said to Uli, "Well, what do you think?"

"If the master orders it's got to be done," answered Uli. "Hans, the carter, and I will bring the wood in, and if the milker helps in the threshing and the others help him with fodder and manure, the threshing won't suffer."

"All right, do it so," said Joggeli, and went out.

Now the storm broke over Uli's head, first in single peals, then in whole batteries of thunder. The carter swore he wouldn't go into the woods; the milker swore he wouldn't touch a flail; the others swore they wouldn't thresh by fours. They wouldn't be howled at; annoyed; they weren't dogs; they knew what was customary, etc. But they knew where all this came from, and he had better look out for himself if he was going to have the evening bells ring at six here (in the winter three o'clock is the hour, six in

summer). Many a fellow had come along like a district governor, and then had had to make tracks like a beaten hound. It was a bad sort of fellow who got his fellow-servants into trouble in order to put the master's eyes out. But they would soon give such a fellow enough of it. Uli said little in reply, only that the master's orders had to be carried out. The master had ordered, not he, and if none of them got off worse than he they ought to thank God for it. He wasn't going to torment anybody, but he wouldn't be tormented either; he had no cause to fear any of them. Then he told the mistress to be kind enough to put up lunch for three, for they would scarcely come back from the woods to dinner.

The next morning they went out into the woods. Much as the carter growled and cursed, he had to go along. The milker would not thresh and the master did not appear. Then the mistress plucked up courage and went out and said that she thought he needn't be too high and mighty to thresh; better folks than he had threshed before now. They couldn't afford to pay a milker who wanted to dry his teeth in the sun all the morning. So the wood was brought in, they scarcely knew how; and in February weather and roads were so bad that they would have had a hard time with the wood.

Hard as Uli had worked outside (and he had a bad time of it, for he always took the heavy end, wishing to be master not only in giving orders, but in working too), still in the evening he always helped to prepare whatever vegetables the mistress ordered, no matter what they were. He never shirked and he prevented the others from doing so; the more they helped each other, he said, the sooner they would get done, and if they wanted food it was only reasonable that they should help get it ready. He himself always helped wherever he could: when one of the maids had washed a basket of potatoes and did not like to carry it alone because she would get all wet, he would help her carry it himself, or would order the boy (half child, half

servant) to do so; and when the latter at first refused, or failed to come at his word, he punished him until the boy learned to obey. It was not right, he said, for one servant to refuse to help another take care of his clothes, or for servants to plague each other; that was just wantonly making service worse than it needed to be. But it was long before they grasped this, for a peculiar atmosphere existed there. The men teased the maids wherever they could; nowhere was there any mutual assistance. When one of the men was asked to lend a hand he scoffed and cursed and would not budge; even the mistress had to endure this, and when she complained to Joggeli he simply said she was always complaining. He didn't hire servants to help the women-folk; they had something else to do beside hauling flowers around.

The behavior of Uli, who was not accustomed to such discord in a house, attracted attention and brought down upon him the bitter mockery and scorn of the men, which was aggravated intolerably by other causes. On the very first Saturday the milker refused, out of sheer wilfulness, to attend to the manure, but let it go till Sunday morning. This Uli would not permit; there was absolutely no reason for putting it off, and it would keep them from cleaning up around the house on Saturday, as was customary. Besides, the commandment said men shouldn't work on Sunday— "thou nor thy man-servant nor thy maid-servant." Least of all was it becoming to leave the dirtiest tasks for Sunday. The milker said, "Sunday fiddlesticks! What do I care about Sunday? I won't do it today."

Uli's blood boiled hotly; but he composed himself and said merely, "Well then, I will."

The master, who had heard the clamor, went into the house, grumbling to himself, "If only Uli wouldn't insist on bossing and starting new customs; I don't like that. Folks have manured on Sunday time out of mind, and were satisfied with it; it would have been good enough for him too."

Chapter XIV

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN THE NEW PLACE

[Uli insists on going to church, but can get no one to accompany him, and all but Freneli ridicule him. The people at church recognize in Uli the new overseer, and wonder how long he will stay; but to his face they tell him to make what profit he can out of Joggeli. He comes home to new ridicule but, facing it down, retires to his cold room to read his Bible. A message is brought from the others to come and join them. They tell him that each new overseer is expected to treat the others to brandy or wine, and all plan to go to the tavern after supper. Freneli is surprised that he is going with them, and cautions him to be on his guard. At the tavern all begin to flatter him at once, but Uli is mindful of what he heard at church and of Freneli's caution. One by one the others all leave, except one man; he offers to take Uli a-courting. Uli half yields, and is led into a dark alley where the others set upon him. He seizes a cudgel from one of them, lays about him with a will, flings one of them into a court, and vanishes, leaving the discomfited assailants to nurse their wounds and trail along home, after vainly waiting for him to appear.]

Chapter XV

ULI GAINS A PLACE IN HOUSE AND FIELD, AND EVEN IN SOME HEARTS

[Uli requests the mistress to be allowed to sit in the house on Sunday afternoons. Freneli, Joggeli, and especially Elsie are put out, the latter because she is wont to spread out her finery on the table and Uli is in her way. But Uli wins her over by admiring the finery, and Elsie begins to set her cap for him. Uli cleans up about the house, and effects many an improvement in yard and field. This vexes Joggeli, and still more so when Uli forces him to plan the spring work. Joggeli makes Uli's life a burden, blows hot and cold, refuses to give orders to the servants, and censures Uli to the others for taking the reins in his hands.]

Chapter XVI

uli gets new cows and new servants

[Uli is sent to market to sell two cows and bring back two others. On the way a man catches up with him and buys his cows at a higher price than Uli expected to get. At the market he makes two excellent purchases, and comes away with more money than he had before. He is tempted to conceal this profit from the master, and keep it for himself, but better counsels prevail. Joggeli bids him share the profit with the milker, and reluctantly pays Uli's expenses out of his own pocket. He boasts to his wife that he has tested Uli by sending a man to him to buy the old cows; she upbraids him for this underhandedness. Uli forces Joggeli to be the first farmer with his haying, but cannot get him to supply decent tools. The other servants are lazy and slack — the milker and carter especially so. Although Uli urges and drives him in vain, Joggeli takes malicious enjoyment in his distress. At last Uli loses all patience and demands the instant dismissal of the carter and the milker, his own departure being the alternative. Joggeli is with difficulty persuaded to take this step; but once taken, the good results are immediate and permanent. The carter and the milker, at first expecting to be taken back in a day or two, finally beg for their old places; but Uli is firm. New men are engaged, with instructions to take their orders from Uli.]

Chapter XVII

how father and son operate on a servant

[Things now run like a newly oiled machine; but Joggeli is discontented and constantly seeks cause for complaint against Uli. He arranges with the miller to have the latter attempt to bribe Uli, to see what he will do. Uli dresses down the miller, and the latter, to clear himself, betrays the instigator of the plan. Uli at once begins to pack up, while the

mistress, informed by the miller, chides her husband. With great difficulty the latter is induced to beg Uli's pardon and assure him that the offense will not be repeated. The harvest goes on this year as never before. Joggeli's son Johannes comes with his wife Trinette and three children for the harvest festival. Trinette is the same kind of fool as Elsie; they think of nothing but their finery, their ailments, and their supposedly fine manners. This annual visit is always a torment. Trinette plays the grand lady, the children are a constant nuisance, and the whole house is in an uproar. Johannes takes a fancy to Uli, and offers him any amount of pay to take a place with him. Freneli overhears the conversation and tells the mistress, who is enraged with Johannes. Joggeli bursts out into a tirade against Freneli.]

Chapter XVIII

HOW A GOOD MOTHER STRAIGHTENS OUT THE CROOKED, AND TURNS EVIL INTO GOOD

[Joggeli sows in Uli's mind suspicion of Freneli, intimating that she is injuring him behind his back. Uli is deeply wounded, and shows it; but neither Freneli nor her aunt knows the reason, and Joggeli is silent. Finally the mistress asks Uli, discovers the trouble, and undeceives him as to Freneli; Joggeli wonders at the restored peace, but dares not ask about it.]

Chapter XIX

A DAUGHTER APPEARS AND WOULD EDUCATE ULI

[The other servants had been wondering at Uli's good behavior, and, not being able to understand it from their viewpoint, had sought for the explanation in self-interest; for Elsie had begun to be very silly with Uli. As time goes on, this becomes more and more noticeable, and Uli himself is not a little put out by it. Elsie proposes to visit her brother, and Uli is to drive her. On the open road, where

there is none to see, she bids him sit beside her; when they come to a village she sends him back to the front seat, and it is "My servant" this and "My servant" that. Uli is offended, but Elsie excuses herself and finally weeps until Uli yields and joins her again. She coaxes him and flirts with him all the way. Johannes welcomes them cordially enough. The "visit," however, consists principally in a clothing contest between Elsie and Trinette, from which the latter, by a shrewd stroke, issues victorious, and thus accelerates Elsie's discomfited departure. Johannes's mismanagement is mercilessly exposed, and his ultimate ruin clearly foreshadowed. On the homeward road Elsie waxes affectionate, and spends most of the time after nightfall in kissing Uli, who, however, is indifferent to her advances.]

Chapter XX

ULI HAS THOUGHTS AND BECOMES A CALCULATOR

So the trip went off safely and innocently, but not without consequences. Little by little the thought began to turn Uli's head that he could easily make himself happy by getting a rich wife; for, unreasonable as it is, in our ordinary speech to get happiness and to get wealth are synonymous. So often we hear it said, "He's lucky; he made a fine marriage and got over ten thousand gulden with his wife. Of course she's a fool and gives him lots of trouble; but what's the odds if you've got money? Money's all that counts." Uli was not free from this general and yet so baseless notion; for did he not wish to become a rich man himself? When he thought of Elsie's utterances, which, to be sure, were made in the rain and mist, it seemed more and more probable to him that she would take him if he tried hard to get her. The brother had treated him so amicably and shown him so much confidence that he probably would really not greatly oppose it; if Elsie was to marry somebody, Uli might suit better than many another. The parents, he thought, wouldn't like it at first,

and would make a fuss; but if Elsie managed it and the thing was done, he wasn't afraid of not winning them over. The thought of one day living on Slough Farm and being his own master there, was infinitely pleasant to him. In twenty years, he sometimes calculated, he would easily double his wealth; he would show the whole district what farming could bring in. One plan after the other rose before him — how to go about it, all the things he would do, what the pastor would say when he published the banns, what the people in his home district would say when some day he would come along with his own horse and wagon and it would be noised around that he had six horses in his stable and ten of the finest cows. To be sure, when he saw Elsie lolling around lazily there were blots on his calculation. He realized that she was no housekeeper, and was moreover queer and extravagant. The last fault she might overcome, he thought, if she had a husband. He could afford to have servants then; other folks got along without the wife doing anything, and with such wealth it wouldn't matter much. There was something the matter with every woman; he'd never heard of any that was so perfect that one wouldn't wish for anything else. Rich, rich! That was the thing. And still, when he saw Elsie, his calculations came to a sudden stop. This fading, languishing, sleepy thing seemed too unpalatable to him. When she touched him with her clammy hands he shuddered; he felt as if he must wipe the spot she had touched. And then when he heard her talk, so affected and stupid, it almost drove him out of the room, and he had to reflect: No, you can't stand living with this woman; every word she said would shame you. But when he was away from Elsie again he saw the handsome farm, heard the money clink, imagined himself looked up to, and he felt as if Elsie were not so bad after all; so he would gradually persuade himself that perhaps she was cleverer than she seemed, and, if she loved a man and he talked sensibly to her, something might yet be done with her, and with a proper man she might yet turn out a very sensible woman.

All this merely went on in Uli's head; but murder will out. The trip had made Uli and Elsie more familiar; they used a different tone in speaking to each other, Elsie regarded him with the peculiar glance of a certain understanding. Uli, to be sure, tried to avoid her eyes, especially when they were in sight of Freneli; for just as Elsie's riches allured him more strongly every day, so Freneli seemed to him ever handier and prettier. The best thing, he often thought, would be to have Freneli stay with them and manage the household. But Elsie ran after Uli more than ever, and when on a Sunday afternoon she was alone with him for an instant in the living-room, she would not rest until they got to kissing. She would have given anything to take another drive with him; but she did not know where to go, and when they went to market her father and mother went along. Just the same, if Uli had had bad intentions and had wanted to secure a marriage by an evil road — of which there are cases enough with men worse than Uli — Elsie would have given plenty of opportunity, nor would she have done anything to shield herself. "Uli, don't be so timid!" she would perhaps have said. But Uli was honest and desired no evil; so he shunned such opportunities, and often avoided the chances Elsie gave him, much preferring to deserve her than to seduce her. He worked all the harder, took especial pains with every detail, and tried to earn the commendation that, if he were not rich already, he could not fail to become so with such aptitude; this, he thought, would have as much weight with the parents as many thousand francs. He did not think of that terrible saying — "Only a servant." But his fellow-servants had eyes in their heads, too, and long before Uli had begun to think of anything, they had noticed Elsie's indiscreet conduct and had teased Uli about it. More and more they ascribed his activity to the intention of becoming son-in-law. The change since the trip was not hidden from them. They invented divers accounts of what had happened, taunted Uli to his face and calumniated him

behind his back. Whenever he required anything new of them they interpreted it to mean that he wanted to get himself valued at their expense; therefore they took it ill, became unruly, and said they would take him down a peg. They lay in wait for Uli and Elsie wherever they could, tried to disturb or to witness their accidental or intentional meetings, and to play all kinds of tricks on them; and they would have dearly loved to uncover some serious scandal, but Uli gave them no opportunity. With him the scale still hung in the balance. At times Elsie and his life on Slough Farm became so bitter to him that he would have liked to be a hundred miles away. But the girl grew more and more in love with him, bought him gifts at every opportunity, gave him more than he wanted to accept, and acted in such a silly way with him that it finally attracted her parents' attention. Joggeli grumbled: there you had it now; now you could see the scheme Uli was working; but he would put a spoke in his wheel. At the same time he did nothing; and in secret he thought that his son, who so often tricked his father, would be served just right if Elsie played the fool and disgraced him by having to marry a servant.

But the mother took it very much to heart and talked to Elsie: she should not be so silly with Uli; she must think what folks would say and how they would gossip about her. It was truly not seemly for a rich girl to treat a servant like a sweetheart. No, she had nothing against Uli, but still he was only a servant, and Elsie surely didn't want to marry a servant.

Then Elsie blubbered: everything she did was wrong; in God's name, they were always complaining of her; now they accused her of being too stuck up, now of making herself too cheap; when she said a kind word to a servant, folks made such a to-do that it couldn't be worse if she had lost her good name; nobody wanted her to have any pleasure, and everybody was down on her; it would be best for her if she could die soon. And Elsie blubbered more and more vehemently, until she was all out of breath, and

her mother had to undo her bodice hastily, thinking in all seriousness that Elsie was going to die. Then the good mother held her peace again; for she did not want to scold Elsie to death. She merely complained at times to Freneli that she didn't know what to do. If she scolded, Elsie was capable of doing something foolish; but if she let things go and something really did happen, then she would get the blame for everything, and people would ask why hadn't she done something in time. Of Uli she couldn't complain; he was acting very sensibly, and she even thought the whole thing was disagreeable to him. And she would be sorry to send him off packing without notice, before they had more grounds of complaint; for, if she did, Joggeli would be the first to accuse her of dismissing through groundless anxiety the best servant they had ever had. But that was the way he always did — when she wanted him to speak he would keep still, and when she wanted him to keep still he would always meddle. She, Freneli, should keep her eyes open, and if she saw anything out of the way she was to tell her. But from Freneli the old woman got little comfort; she acted as if the whole affair were none of her business. Elsie could not refrain from talking to Freneli about Uli — how fine and handsome he was, and how she wouldn't take her oath that she wouldn't marry him yet; if her people angered her by refusing to do what she wanted, they'd just see what she'd do. She wouldn't take long to think about it, and she'd only have to say the word and Uli would go and have the banns published. Then, when Freneli would say little to all this, Elsie would accuse her of being jealous. Or when Freneli would talk to her and tell her not to make a fool of Uli, whom she didn't really want, or would tell her not to grieve her parents in this way, Elsie would accuse her of wanting Uli herself and of trying to entice her away from him in order to climb up in the world; but Uli wouldn't take such a penniless pauper as she — he was too shrewd for that. She needn't imagine that she could get a husband so easily; the poorest servant

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THE BATH

BENJAMIN VAUTHIER

would think twice before he'd take a poor girl, and twice again before he'd take a bastard — that was the greatest disgrace there was. Although Freneli felt such speeches deeply she would give no sign of it, would neither weep nor scold, but say at most, "Elsie, that you're not a bastard too isn't your fault; and that you haven't one by now isn't your fault either."

The hardest thing for Freneli was to regulate her conduct toward Uli. The more Elsie's money went to his head, the more he felt himself drawn to Freneli; he could not bear to have her give him short answers or to seem angry with him, and tried in every way to pacify her and win her favor. He often fled from Elsie, and never sought her out; he never fled from Freneli, but often looked for her; while Freneli fled from him and Elsie ran after him. Freneli wanted to be short and dry with Uli, and still, with the best intentions, she often could not but be friendly with the friendly lad, and at times forgot herself and would spend two or three minutes chatting and laughing with him. When Elsie happened to see this there were terrible scenes. First she would make the wildest accusations against Freneli, until she could talk no more and was completely out of breath; when in this state she would sometimes rush at her, and would have tried to beat her if she had had the strength. Then she would pitch into Uli; a hundred times he would have to hear that he was a filthy fellow and only a servant; that she saw what she had to expect if she was such a fool as folks thought; but, thank heaven, there was still time enough, and she wouldn't be such a fool as to bring her money to a man who she was afraid would waste it all on women. Then she would begin to bawl at such false statements, and say she was going to die either by hanging or shooting herself. Often she would become reconciled in the midst of her tears, and Uli had to promise not to run after others any more, and not to say another good word to that old Freneli, who just wanted to lead him on and astray. Again, the quarrel would continue and Elsie would

sulk. Then Uli would think: a girl that was so jealous, and so often told him he was a servant, and bawled and sulked so much, wouldn't be the most agreeable kind of wife; it would be hard living with her, and it would be better if he drove the whole thing out of his mind. But as soon as he became indifferent to her sulks, Elsie grew anxious and sought a reconciliation; then she would buy him something, or seek some other opportunity to flatter Uli, and beg him to love her, for she had no other joy in life. And when she made him so angry he mustn't take it ill of her; she only did it because her love was so great and she didn't want anybody else to have him — etc., etc. When she once had him to herself she wouldn't be jealous any more; but so long as she was all in the air and didn't know where she stood, she often felt as if she'd rather die. And she didn't really know whether Uli loved her, either; sometimes it seemed to her that, if he loved her very much, he'd go at it quite differently, and take hold of things better; but he was just like a wooden doll and never lifted a hand. Then when Uli would say that he didn't know how to do any better, that he too didn't exactly know whether Elsie really wanted him, and if she was in earnest about it she should speak with her parents, or they would go to the pastor and announce their engagement and then see what would come of it, Elsie would say that there was no hurry about it; they could get married any time; the chief thing was that he should love her, and then a year would be soon enough, or if he went at it right (that depended on him, she would see about it), six months; but with that Freneli he must have nothing more to do or she would scratch both their eyes out and the hussy would have to leave the house.

Of course the affair made talk for miles around, and people told much more than there was to tell. There were two parties: one thought the parents were rightly served, the other thought Uli would get his deserts with his rich wife. The longer it lasted, and it was over a year now,

the more probable seemed his success; the more the servants submitted to Uli and ranged themselves on the side of the presumptive son-in-law, so that the farm took on a more and more prosperous appearance and Uli became more and more indispensable. Even Joggeli, into whose money-bags the cash profit flowed, and who could easily figure what twenty additional cords of fodder and a thousand sheaves of grain meant, choked down his anger and shut one eye, comforting himself by saying that he would use Uli as long as possible; and if matters ever got serious, why then there would still be time enough. Once when Johannes, having heard the gossip, came along, and cursed and swore and demanded that Uli be discharged, Joggeli would not hear to it; as long as he lived he would give orders here, and Johannes would be glad to have Uli if he could get him; what went on here was none of his business, and if they wanted to give Elsie to Uli that was none of his business either. He needn't think he'd inherit everything; for the time being everything that they still had and that he hadn't wormed out of 'em was theirs; the more Johannes carried on, the sooner Elsie would have to marry — not that it would have to be Uli; there were others too. They knew well enough how much he loved them; if he just had the money he'd never ask again after father and mother and Elsie; and they could all marry again for all he cared, and if to tramps or gipsies it would be all one to him.

Thus Joggeli talked to his son in his nagging, coughing way, so that the mother grew quite anxious, and interrupted: Johannes needn't be afraid; that wouldn't happen, for she was still at the helm and Elsie wouldn't force them to everything, and Uli was a good lad, and so on. Then Johannes wanted to talk with Uli himself, but he was not to be found; he had gone out to get a cow, it was said. Trinette, this time much more beautifully sulphur-yellow than Elsie had been, strutted around her with contemptuous mien and turned-up nose, and finally said, " Fie and for shame, how common you're making yourself! To take up

with a servant! It's a disgrace for the whole family! If my folks had known that my husband's sister would marry a servant, they'd have given him the mitten like a flash; they didn't like him any too well as it was; but I was fool enough to want him absolutely. We can't count you as one of the family any more, and then you can see where you'll find a roof for your head; you can't stay here any more — I say this once and for all. Faugh, to have a love-affair with a servant! You give me the creeps; I can't bear to look at you any more. Ugh, aren't you ashamed to the bottom of your soul, and don't you feel like crawling into the ground?"

However, Elsie was not ashamed, but paid Trinette back heartily in her own coin: a girl could choose anybody she wanted for her sweetheart, and could marry a servant or a master; all men were alike before God. But if once she was a wife she'd be ashamed to have her name connected now with the stable-boy and now with the butcher, now with the herder and now with the carter, and finally with all the peddlers and traders, and to have children with no two noses the same and looking as much alike as Swiss and Italians. But for Freneli and the mother, the two sisters-in-law would have torn the grass-green and the sulphur-yellow dresses from each other's bodies. When the mother wanted to help out Trinette by speaking for her, Elsie became so excited that they had to put her to bed. Now, she said, when she recovered consciousness and speech — now she surely would do what she wanted; she wouldn't let herself be made into sausages like a fat sow; and it was cruel of her parents to want just one child to inherit and to let the other child pine away without a husband, just so all the money would stay in one pile.

Johannes and his wife did not stay long. Turning in frequently on the homeward road, and giving up all restraint, they spun out at length the whole story to their friends and colleagues, male and female, and their story carried the rumor to complete certainty. The brother and

his wife told it themselves, people said, and they ought to know.

Not long afterward Uli drove to market with a horse, but soon saw that he could not sell it for what he was instructed to get, so, as it was bad weather, he took it from the market-place and stabled it in an inn. Turning a corner to enter the inn, he bumped into his old master. With unconcealed joy Uli held out his hand and told him how glad he was to see him and to be with him for a while. The master was somewhat cool and spoke of much business, but finally named a place where they could drink a bottle in peace. There, after they were seated in a corner fairly well out of sight, they began the preliminaries. Johannes asked whether there had been much hay, and Uli said yes, and asked whether his grain had fallen too; the first wind had felled theirs. "You're doing well," continued the master after some further talk, "and what do I hear? Folks say you're soon to be farmer at Slough Farm."

"Why, who says that?" asked Uli.

"Oh, folks say it's being talked about far and wide, and they say it's surely true."

"Folks always know more than those concerned," said Uli.

"There must be something in it," answered the master.

"Oh," said Uli, "I wouldn't say that it might not be some time, but it's a long way off yet; nothing has been said about it and it might turn out either way."

"Well," said Johannes, "it seems to me there's been enough talk about it."

"Why, how so?" asked Uli.

"Why, the girl's pregnant!"

"That's an accursed lie," cried Uli, "I haven't been near her. I won't say that I couldn't have been; but I'd have been ashamed to. Everybody would have blamed me and thought it was a scoundrelly trick, like a good many others; and I didn't want that. Folks mustn't say of me that I got a rich wife that way."

"So, so!" said Johannes; "then things aren't as I've heard, and here I thought that Uli wanted to ask me to be his spokesman. I shouldn't have liked that, I must say, and that's the reason I'd have preferred not to meet you. I'm glad it isn't so; I'd have dirtied my own hands with it too. And in any case it would have vexed me if you'd done like other skunks. But something is in it?"

"Oh," replied Uli, "I wouldn't deny that I've thought the daughter wanted me, and it might be carried through if we took hold of it right. And, to be sure, it has seemed to me that that would be a piece of good fortune for a poor lad like me; I could never do better."

"I suppose it's that pale, transparent little thing, that has to go in out of the wind for fear of getting blown away?"

"Why, she isn't the prettiest that ever was," said Uli; "she's thin and sickly; but she'll surely get better when she has a husband, the doctor says; and she'll get fifty thousand."

"Does she still loll around the house, or does she take hold with the housekeeping?" asked Johannes.

"She doesn't do much work and isn't in the kitchen very often; but she can knit finely and makes all sorts of pretty things with beads. But if she gets the farm some time we could afford a cook. If she only looks after things now and then, she doesn't need to do everything herself," said Uli.

"Ye-up, but to look after things you have to know how yourself; it's foolish to think that if a woman just looks at something, that's all that's necessary. For instance, a woman can sit all day in a drug-store with her knitting, but that won't keep the apprentices from doing as they please. And I thought she looked rather ugly and scowled at a person instead of giving him a friendly word."

"She does have failings," said Uli, "and is mighty sensitive too. But if she once has a good husband and has enough to do to keep her busy, so that she could forget herself now and then, she'd surely improve. Not that she

can't ever be friendly. She can act very prettily at times; and if the farm's properly worked one can get at least ten thousand sheaves from it, not counting rye and wheat."

"That's a lot," said Johannes, "and there aren't many more such farms in the canton. But if you gave me the choice between a good farm and a bad wife, or neither, I'd take the latter a hundred times over. To be rich is nice, but riches aren't happiness; and to have a hateful sour woman at home, that either turns up her nose or bawls at everything, would make a home for the devil to live in. And if a man has to look for his pleasure outside his house, he's badly off."

"But master," said Uli, "you always told me to save and be thrifty, and then I'd be somebody; that the man who had nothing was nothing."

"Quite right, Uli," said the master, "that's what I said and what I still say. A man is happier when thrifty than when extravagant, and he's no man if he can't provide for his old age while he's young and single. If a man doesn't begin well while he's young he'll come to a bad end. A good lad with some money can marry more easily than a vagabond, and should look for a good wife; but the richest isn't always the best. Some women I'd rather take without a farthing than others with a hundred francs. Everything depends on the person. Do as you will, but consider it well."

"To be sure, Elsie's a wretched creature," said Uli, "but she can improve; many a girl has been thin when young, and has grown stout in old age; and she's not really bad tempered, especially when she's contented. When she's angry — then, to be sure, she doesn't know just what she's saying, and throws my position in my face, and twits me about other girls; but when she's contented again she can be quite amusing, and has the best heart in the world. She's given me presents, Lord knows how many, and would have given me lots more if I hadn't kept stopping her."

"Do as you will," said Johannes, "but I tell you again: consider it well. It seldom turns out well when such different folks come together, and it has rarely turned out well when a servant has married his master's daughter. I set great store by you; to another man I wouldn't have said so much. Now I must go home; come and see us some time when you have the leisure; then we'll talk the matter over some more, if it's not too late."

Uli looked discontentedly after his master. "I shouldn't have thought," he reflected, "that he would grudge me my good fortune. But that's the way with these cursed farmers; they're all alike; they don't want to see a servant get hold of a farm. Johannes is one of the best of 'em; but he can't stand it either to see his servant get to be richer than he is and own a finer farm. Why else should it have mattered to him whether Elsie's pretty or ugly? He didn't just look out for a pretty one when he married. They seem to think it's almost a sin when the like of us thinks of a farmer's daughter, and still many a one might be glad if she got a mannerly servant for a husband and didn't have to live like a dog on the farm all her life." But he said to himself that he wouldn't let himself be dissuaded so easily; the thing had gone on too long and there had been too much talk about it for him to back out that way. But the affair must be brought to a conclusion, he thought; he wanted to know where he stood, once and for all; he was tired of hanging between door and hinge. He'd tell Elsie that she must speak with her parents; by autumn the banns must be published, or he'd leave at Christmas; he wouldn't be made a fool of any longer.

Chapter XXI

How a trip to a watering-place sails through a calculation

[Elsie and her mother go to spend a week at the Gurnigel, a fashionable resort, leaving a heavenly peace behind them. Elsie attracts extraordinary attention with her

clothes, and is too stupid to understand that she is being ridiculed to her face. At the same time her hundred thousand francs dowry are not to be sneezed at, and these lure a bird of prey in the shape of a cotton-dealer, who takes mother and daughter off for a drive, and, making good use of his opportunity, carries his point by storm. Elsie is in the seventh heaven, her mother not quite so overjoyed.]

Chapter XXII

OF INWARD CONFLICTS, WHICH ARE TO BE ENDED BY AN ENGAGEMENT

[Joggeli will not hear to the affair, fearing to lose Uli. Freneli chides Elsie for breaking her promise to Uli, and the latter is at first completely stunned, overwhelmed with chagrin, rage, and disappointment. He is only saved from some act of rash folly by Freneli, who counsels him to put the mockers off the track by pretending utter indifference. The cotton-dealer loses no time in coming in state to secure his prize; Joggeli is quite overcome by his smooth tongue, but requests a fortnight for deliberation with his son and others.]

Chapter XXIII

OF SUBSEQUENT EMBARRASSMENTS WHICH RESULT FROM THE ENGAGEMENT

[Uli's behavior staggers the gossips, but his assumed indifference soon becomes genuine; none the less, he is resolved to give up his place at Christmas. Johannes and Trinette are both beside themselves; the reports about the prospective son-in-law are conflicting and doubtful. But Elsie is so wild, and the cotton-dealer so persuasive, that the parents finally give reluctant consent to the marriage. Elsie constantly accuses Freneli of flirting with her husband, who is not insensible to Freneli's beauty and charm; she resolves to leave Slough Farm also, since Elsie is no longer to be controlled and Freneli is subjected to her unbridled temper. The old mistress is in utter consternation

at the imminent loss of her two best helpers, Uli and Freneli; and new sorrow comes to her through the son-in-law, who guts the house of its stores on pretense of putting the money out at interest, and keeps a hawk's eye on all her housekeeping.]

Chapter XXIV

OF ANOTHER TRIP, WHICH DOES NOT DESTROY A CALCULATION, BUT UNEXPECTEDLY CONCLUDES ONE

All this weighed on the good mother's mind, and when she reflected that Uli and Freneli would both leave besides, that her son-in-law would then get the reins wholly into his hands, that she would have to run the house on nothing, be stingy to the poor, and be held accountable for every cup of flour and for every cake she baked, such a feeling of misery came over her that she had to sit down and cry, shedding tears enough to wash her hands in, until even Joggeli came out and told her not to cry so — that everybody would hear her and would wonder what was the matter.

What he had said, she answered, didn't amount to anything; she knew that he had to talk at times. And Freneli also comforted her, telling her not to take it so hard; things always turned out better than one expected. But she shook her head and bade them let her alone; she would have to compose herself — talking was no use. For many days following she sought composure. They saw her going about silently as if she were revolving grave things in her mind, or sitting apart now and then when she thought herself unnoticed, her hands in her lap, and picking up from time to time the tip of her apron and wiping her eyes with the wrong side of it. Finally her spirits became lighter; the state of uncertainty seemed to leave her; she said she felt much better, but she thought she'd like to go away somewhere; she had such an unsatisfied longing, and she believed she'd get over it if she could get away for a day or

two. This time Joggeli had no objection; his old wife had made even him anxious. She could go either to her son or her daughter, whichever she wished! Uli would drive her, for he had plenty of time now, said he.

No, she didn't want to go there, she said; there was everlasting quarreling there, and even if she filled her pockets with thalers, she wouldn't have enough. She thought she'd like to visit cousin Johannes; they had long promised him a visit, but hadn't kept the promise and she had never been there. She would see a new road and an unfamiliar country, and could perhaps best forget what was grieving her. She wanted to take Freneli along; she too hadn't been away for a long time. They hadn't taken her with them to Elsie's wedding, and it was only fair to give the girl a pleasure once in a while.

To the latter plan Joggeli had many objections; but this time he gave in for his old wife's sake and agreed to get along for a couple of days. In a glory of color the withered leaves hung on the trees, in the gleam of their own afterglow; below them, in cheerful green, lay the young crops, and played merrily with the winking dew-drops that clung to their tips; and over everything the sky spread itself, mysterious and fragrant, the impenetrable source of God's wonders. Black crows were flying across the fields; green woodpeckers hung on the trees; fleet squirrels ran across the road and, hastily gaining a branch, peeped out curiously at the passing travelers, while high in the air the snow-geese sailed on toward a warmer country in their well-ordered triangle, and their strange travel-song floated strangely down from their lofty height.

The mother's judicious eyes roved actively over the whole scene; there was no end to her comments, and she and Uli exchanged many a shrewd remark. Especially when they drove through the villages did the noteworthy things become legion, and there were few houses that did not offer her opportunity for comment. To sit at home all the time was no use, said she; one always kept seeing the same

things. One ought to drive around the country from time to time; then one could not merely gratify his curiosity, but learn a lot too. Folks didn't do things everywhere alike, and in some places they did better than in others, and so one could always pick and choose the best. They had not driven much more than two hours when she began to suggest that they must give Blackie something to eat. He was not used to running so long, and they must bring him home in good condition. "You stop at the next public-house," she said in response to Uli's objections, "and see if he won't eat a measure of oats. I'd just as soon have something myself; I'm actually beginning to be cold."

Arrived there, she said to Uli, "When the horse has his oats, come in." In the doorway she again turned around and cried, "Do you hear? Come in then." After the hostess having wiped off the benches in the tavern with her apron, had asked, "What can I bring you?" and a good bottle and some tea had been ordered, the women sat down, looked around the room, made their comments in a low voice, and wondered that it was no later by this clock. But Uli had probably driven fast; one could see that he had been in a hurry to get there. When finally the order was brought with the excuse that it had taken a long time because the water had not been hot and the wood had refused to burn, the mother told Freneli to call Uli; she didn't see why he didn't come; she had told him twice. When he had come and had drunk their health sufficiently, the hostess tried to begin a conversation, saying that another wedding party had stopped in there today. The mother laughed out heartily, and Uli was amused too; but Freneli grew red and angry and remarked that not all the parties on the road today were wedding parties; that other folks, she supposed, had the right to go driving on Saturday, too; the road wasn't reserved for wedding parties. — She shouldn't get so angry, said the hostess; she didn't know her, but it seemed to her that the young folks were just right for each other; she hadn't seen such a handsome couple for a long time. The

mother appeased the hostess, saying that she needn't excuse herself so much; they had had a great laugh about it at home, and had thought that's the way it would be, and then too the girl had got so angry.

"It's not nice of you, auntie, to help torment me," said Freneli; "if I had known this I shouldn't have come along."

"Why, nobody's tormenting you," said her aunt laughing. "Don't be so silly; many a girl would be tickled to be taken for a bride."

"That doesn't tickle me," said Freneli, "and if I'm not let alone, I'll go home this minute."

"Why, you can't tie up people's mouths, and you ought to be glad that they haven't anything worse to say about you," answered her aunt.

"It's bad enough, if folks marry me off to a man that I don't want and that doesn't want me."

Freneli would have continued indefinitely if they had not hitched up and driven on. They advanced rapidly. Uli had much to tell as to who owned this house or that field. As he saw the first of Johannes' fields, his heart laughed within him. All that he had formerly done there came back to him; from a distance he pointed everything out, and praised its good qualities. Then came another field and still another, and they were driving up to the house before they knew it. Johannes' people were busy putting up sauerkraut in the front shed; the whole household was gathered there. All raised their heads as the unexpected little wagon came along. At first the strangers were not recognized; then the cry arose: "It's Uli, it's Uli," and the children sprang down from the porch; then Johannes said, "Cousin Joggeli's wife is with him! What the dickens has got into her? What does she want?"

He and his wife now stepped forward and reached up their hands in welcome, and his wife said, "God bless you, Uli, are you bringing your wife with you?"

Then the mistress laughed heartily again, and said, "There you have it, whether you will or no; that's the way it is; why, everybody says so."

"Everywhere they take us for a wedding party," explained Uli, "because we're driving along on Saturday, when so many folks get married."

"Ho, and not only that," said Johannes, "but it strikes me that you wouldn't make a bad couple."

"You hear, Freneli," said her aunt, "Johannes says so too; there's no use fighting it any more."

With Freneli tears had been contending with smiles, anger with jest; finally she gained the mastery over herself, so as not to make a scene before strangers, and replied, "I've always heard that if there was to be a marriage, two people had to want it; but in this case nobody wants it, and so I don't see how anything is to come of it."

"What isn't, can be," said Johannes' wife; "such things often come unexpectedly."

"I don't feel any traces of it," said Freneli, but then broke off and held out her hand again, saying how bold it had been of her to go along; but her aunt had wished it, and she could make the excuses if they were put to expense.

"I'm very glad you've come," said the housewife, and urgently bade them come in, although the visitors said they would not keep her from her work, but would stay outside, it was so nice and pleasant in the open. But, protest as they might that they needed nothing and had just eaten, a fire was made and only by a thrice repeated trip to the kitchen could a formal meal be prevented, and hospitality reduced to a pot of coffee. Freneli had soon made friends with the oldest daughter, who had grown from an active child into a beautiful young girl, and had to inspect all her treasures. Out of due respect, Uli soon withdrew, and the older people were left alone.

Finally, with a heavy sigh, Uli's mistress began the conversation, saying that she'd have to come out with the

reason for her journey; she hadn't known any better place to go for advice and help than just here. Johannes had so often helped 'em that she thought he wouldn't leave 'em in the lurch this time either. Everything had gone so well with 'em that it had been a real pleasure. To be sure, Uli had got Elsie into his head for awhile; but the girl herself had been to blame for that, and she thought Uli had seen in the end that she was no suitable match for him. Then misfortune had taken them to the Gurnigel, and there Elsie had picked up a husband, and since then everything had been ruined. Her Johannes was carrying on; her son-in-law wasn't as he should be, but poked his nose into everything and thought she ought not to spend anything more in her housekeeping. Elsie was always quarreling with Freneli, and Freneli was going to leave on account of it; Uli too; everything came on her, and she didn't know for the life of her what to do; many a night she hadn't closed an eye and just cried and cried because such misfortune had come to her in her old age. Then an idea had come to her; surely no sensible person could make any objection if they should lease out their farm, and that would take the load off her. And then she had thought that they couldn't possibly get a better tenant than Uli, who'd look after everything for them and was good and honest; and Uli could make his fortune there, too, for he shouldn't be treated badly, she would see to that; it would be his profit as well as theirs.

"That's all well and good," said Johannes; "but don't be angry, cousin, only I must ask whether you think that every one will consent? There's a lot of folks have to have their say in this, if it's to be done. What will your folks say? Joggeli's awfully queer sometimes. And your children will put in their oar too and want to make the farming as profitable as possible. Uli has a risky undertaking. A single bad year, with sickness of the stock or the like, can ruin him. On such a farm a thousand francs more or less

in earnings can scarcely be seen, whereas in a single year four or five thousand can be lost."

"Cousin Johannes," said she, "you mustn't think we're such heartless creatures as to ruin our tenant on account of a single bad year. If we had the farm, shouldn't we have the bad year ourselves, and why should the tenant have to stand the loss if it's too dry or too wet? It's our farm all the time, and how can he avoid it? It's often seemed cruel to me when the leaseholder always has to pay the same rent, whether or no. No, cousin, Joggeli's queer, but he's not the worst, and, if everything else failed, it isn't as if I didn't have something of my own to help out with."

"No harm intended," said Johannes; "but to do a thing properly one has to mention everything. I should be awfully glad of it, for your sake and for Uli's and for my own too; for I set some store by Uli. It's true that he's almost as dear to me as my own child, and I won't be stingy if I can do anything for him. He told me about Elsie, too, and I tried to talk him out of it. He didn't like it at the time, as I could well see. I wonder whether he'll say anything about it to me now. Shall I talk to him about this affair, and try to sound him and see what he thinks, or shall I talk right out bluntly, or do you want to talk with Joggeli first?"

"I'd rather be clear about Uli and Freneli, and that's why I came with 'em," said she. "If I talk to Joggeli about it and then find out later that they're not willing, I'll never hear the last of it and how silly and stupid I was; you know he's so queer and never gives up a grudge; and still he's not the worst either. If you're willing, cousin, then sound Uli and see what he says, drag the secret out of him; I'd like it very much if I knew where he stands. It seems to me I'd be in heaven if the business was all fixed up. Don't you like the girl too?" asked his cousin. And Johannes and his wife praised her highly, saying how

pretty and attractive she was, and the former promised to help as much as he could.

That evening it was not convenient; there was no opportunity to be alone with Uli. But the next morning, as soon as they had breakfasted, Johannes asked Uli if he would go out to the pasture with him; he would like to show him what he had sowed and ask him about this and that. Uli's mistress admonished them not to stay too long, for they wanted to set out in good season so as not to get home too late. While Johannes's wife was urging her to stay over another night the men strolled away.

It was another beautiful day. One steeple after another proclaimed that it was the Lord's day, that hearts should open to the Lord and keep Sabbath with Him, to receive His peace and feel His love. The two wanderers felt the solemnity of it; over many a field they walked with little speech. Then they came to the edge of the woods, whence they could see the valley floating in the wonderful autumn haze and hear the peal of the bells from many steeples, calling the people together to take into their open hearts the seed that bears sixty and a hundredfold on good soil. Silently they sat down there and drew in through the wide-open gates of their eyes and ears the glorious sermon of the Lord, which can be heard without words every day in all countries; and in deep reverence they heard the tones reëcho in the sanctuary of their souls.

At last Johannes asked, "You're not going to stay on Slough Farm?"

"No," said Uli. "Not that I'm angry with them about Elsie. I'm glad it turned out so. Now it's over I can see that I shouldn't have had a happy hour with her, and that with such an ugly, lazy hussy no amount of money would make a man happy. I can't understand what I was thinking of. But I don't want to stay. The son-in-law is always there, wants to start running things, and swindles the mistress wherever he can, so that I can't bear to see it; and I won't take orders from him."

"But what do you want?" asked Johannes.

"That's just what I'd like to talk to you about," said Uli. "I could get places enough; I could go to their son, too, and he'd give me as much pay as I wanted. But I don't know; being a servant isn't exactly unsatisfactory, but it seems to me that, if I want to start out for myself, now's the time. I'm in the thirties, and almost beginning to get old."

"Oh, that's it!" said Johannes. "Have you got marrying into your head?"

"Not especially," said Uli. "But if I'm going to marry it ought to be soon, and a man ought to start for himself, too, while he's still active. But I don't know what to do. I haven't enough for anything worth while, for what's two thousand francs to make a decent start with? I keep thinking about what you said, that you can't get the rent out of a little farm, and that a leaseholder can't very well take over a big place unless he has money in hand, and still he'll be ruined on a little one."

"Ho," said Johannes, "two thousand francs is something, and there's farms here and there with the stock all on 'em, where you can get the stock too on appraisal, so that you could keep your cash in hand for your own dealings, and then if you needed more you'd probably find folks that had money."

"Yes, but they won't give it to me. If a man wants money he's got to have good security, or guarantors, and where'd he get 'em?"

"Well, Uli," said Johannes, "that's just what I told you: a good name is good security. Fifteen years ago I wouldn't have lent you fifteen cents; but today, if you need two or three thousand francs, you can have 'em on a simple note; or if you want me to indorse your note, just say so. What are folks in the world for if not to help each other?"

"That's good news," said Uli; "I wouldn't have dared

to think of that; and if I knew of anything, I'd take right hold."

"I wouldn't," said Johannes. "I'd go looking for a wife first, and then when I had one I'd make my start. Lots of men have been ruined before now, only because their wives didn't suit their business, or wouldn't. To carry on a household well, there must be harmony in it. Once you've got a wife and the two of you choose a place to buy or let that suits you both, you've gained a lot. Or have you something of the kind under way?"

"No," said Uli. "I know of one, but she wouldn't take me."

"Why not?" asked Johannes. "Is it another rich farmer's daughter?"

"No," said Uli, "it's the girl that came along today. She hasn't much money; but whoever gets her is lucky. I've often thought that with her a man would go farther, even though she hasn't a cent, than with the rich Elsie. Whatever she takes hold of she does well; she has luck with everything, and there's nothing she doesn't understand. I don't think she's ever tired; she's first in the morning and last at night, and never idle all day. You never have to wait for meals, she never forgets the maids, and you'd think she couldn't lose her temper; the more there is to do, the merrier she gets, whereas most people get cross when they've got a lot to do, and it's no fun to be around. She's thrifty in everything and yet she's good to the poor, and when anybody gets sick she can't look after him enough. There's nobody like her far and wide."

"But why shouldn't you get her?" asked Johannes. "Does she hate you?"

"Not exactly," said Uli. "She's nice to me; when she can do me a favor she never says no, and when she sees that I'd like to have something done she helps me as much as she can; and she never tries to put obstacles in the way, like so many women, who, when they see you absolutely ought to do one thing, absolutely want something else and

hinder you as much as they can. But still she's rather proud, and she can't forget that she comes of a distinguished family, even if she is illegitimate. If anybody gets anywhere near her she goes for him as if she'd eat him, and I wouldn't advise anybody to try to flirt with her and put hands on her, as is customary in lots of places. More than one has got a good box from her."

"But that doesn't at all mean that she wouldn't have you," said Johannes. "If she won't let herself be fingered by everybody, I can't think any the less of her for it."

"Well, then there's something else," said Uli. "I daren't think of Freneli any more. Wouldn't she say to me, 'Now that you can't have the rich one, I'm to be good enough for you, am I? If you could prefer that green, yellow Elsie to me, then I don't want you now, either; I don't want a fellow who has gone around sweethearting with such a withered grass-blade as that.' She's bound to give me that answer. And still I thought of Freneli more than I did of Elsie all through the affair; only now I begin to see that I've loved Freneli more and more, and if I had the girl I'd guarantee to take over a farm and make more on it than anybody else. But now it's too late; she won't have me; she's awfully peculiar."

"Ho!" said Johannes, "never lose your courage as long as a girl's single. They're the queerest sort of ducks and generally do just the opposite of what you expect. If that's the way it is I'd have a try; the girl pleases me."

"No, master, I wouldn't ask that girl for a hundred crowns. I know well enough that it will almost break my heart if I have to go away from her and can't see her every day any more. But if I asked her and she should despise me and say no, I think I'd hang myself on the garret ladder. By the Almighty, I couldn't stand it if another man led her off to church; I believe I'd shoot him. But she won't marry, she'll stay single."

Then Johannes began to laugh very heartily and asked

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IN AMBUSH

how he knew that such a girl, twenty-three years old, would stay single.

"Oh," said Uli, "she won't have anybody; I don't know who'd be good enough for her."

Now Johannes said they had better think about getting home before church was out; he didn't wish to run into the church-goers. Uli followed him, speaking little, and what he said was concerned only with Freneli, now one thing and then another, and he asked Johannes to promise that he wouldn't let a word that Uli had told him cross his lips. "You simpleton," said Johannes, "who should I tell?"

Meanwhile Uli's mistress had long since been quivering with impatience, and as soon as Uli and his old master entered the room she said to him, "Go up to the room we slept in and see what Freneli's doing. Tell her to pack up; we want to start out." Uli found the girl standing before a table, folding up one of her aunt's aprons. He stepped softly up behind her, put his arm about her quite gently, and said, "Your aunt's in a hurry." Freneli turned swiftly about, and looked silently up at Uli, as if surprised at this unwonted familiarity, and the latter asked, "Are you still angry at me?"

"I've never been angry at you," she replied.

"Then give me a kiss; you've never given me one," answered Uli, and bent down.

At that instant Freneli twisted away so powerfully that he was driven back half across the room; and still it seemed to him as if he had got his kiss; he thought he felt Freneli's lips quite distinctly on one spot. But the latter waggishly gave him a dressing down, intimating that she thought he was too old for such tricks, and probably her aunt hadn't sent him up to take her time with such foolishness. He must think what Stini, his old sweetheart, would say to it if she came in; she didn't want to have a wrestling match with her, like Yrsi. At the same time she laughed so that Uli felt quite crushed and got out as soon as he could.

They were later in setting out than they had expected, for as they were about to hitch up they had to sit down to a meal for which Johannes's wife had summoned her whole culinary skill and the entire resources of her house. Although Uli's mistress kept saying time after time, "Good heavens, who can eat of every dish?" still there was no end of pressing them, and she was not left in peace until she declared that she simply couldn't swallow another thing; if she was to eat another bite, she'd burst.

While Uli was hitching up she put new coins into the hands of her cousin's children, although the latter tried to refuse them, and the parents told her not to go to such expense and admonished the children not to be so bold as to take them. When they took them just the same and ran and showed the treasure to their mother, she said, "Oh, what a thing to do; it makes us ashamed." And then her cousin said it was not worth talking about, and urged them to come very soon and visit them, and get back what this visit had cost them. They would surely come, was the answer; but they shouldn't have hurried so and should have stayed another day. So amid much talk they finally reached their little wagon and continued talking as they drove away, Freneli telling her aunt all that she had noticed, which was indeed not a little; for she had seen many things of which she said, "If I was younger and could work better I'd have that too." To all this Uli said nothing, and only paid such strict attention to his Blackie, which he made trot so sharply that his mistress finally said, "Uli, is anything the matter with you? Aren't you driving Blackie too hard? He's not used to running so." Uli excused himself and received orders to stop when they had gone something more than halfway. * * *

Without paying attention to the conversation of the two women, Uli drove to the designated inn. The hostess welcomed them and led them into a special room, as the mother had desired, after telling Uli to come right in. Then she ordered wine and a couple of plates with something to eat;

driving had made them hungrier than they would have believed possible.

The order was brought, but Uli was missing. The hostess had been sent out after him, and came back and said she had told him; but still he did not come. Then the mistress said, "Go, Freneli, and tell him to come at once." Freneli hesitated and thought they oughtn't to compel him; if he was hungry or thirsty he'd come all right. "If you won't go," said her aunt, "I'll have to go myself." Then Freneli went out in a temper, and with stinging words drove Uli along, who had been standing in the sulks by the bowling alley and had at first refused to come. He could stay where he was, for all of her, she said; but her aunt had ordered it. It was she that wanted him to come; she herself, Freneli, had no desire to run after him any more.

Uli came at last, giving little answer to the many reproaches of his mistress for having to be forced to come. But she filled his glass heartily, forced him to eat, and kept up a chatter of talk — how well she had liked it at Cousin Johannes' house, and how she could now see where Uli had got his training. But he must have been especially good to them, too, for the children still hung upon him and their parents loved him almost like a son. "I suppose you'll want to go back to them, when you leave us."

"No," said Uli.

"It's not customary to ask, to be sure; but will you tell me where you are going?" asked his mistress.

"I don't know yet," said Uli; "I haven't been in a hurry to take a place, although I could have had several."

"Well then, stay with us; that's the best thing for both of us; we're accustomed to each other now."

"I hope you won't take it ill of me," he said; "but I don't intend to be a servant any more."

"Have you something else?" she asked.

"No," he answered.

"Well, if you don't want to be a servant any more, suppose we make you tenant on our farm."

This speech affected Uli like a sudden blow. He dropped his mutton-laden fork on his plate, but kept his mouth open, turned his saucer eyes upon his mistress and stared at her as if she had come down from the moon. Freneli, who had been standing at the window, vexed at Uli's slow eating, turned swiftly about and opened eyes and ears to see what would happen.

"Yes, look at me all you want," said the mistress to Uli; "I mean it seriously; if you won't stay as servant would you stay as leaseholder?"

"Mistress," said Uli at last, "how should I be able to become your tenant? I'm not able; I'd have to be lots better off than I am. You're only making game of me."

"No, Uli, I mean it," said his mistress, "and your not having money doesn't matter; we could arrange it so that it wouldn't cost you anything to begin; the whole place is furnished."

"But what do you suppose, mistress," exclaimed Uli; "even if you did this, who would be my security? A single bad year on such a farm would ruin me. The place is too big for me."

"Ho, Uli, that can be managed, and we're not such hard-hearted wretches as to let a tenant that suits us be ruined on account of a single year. Just say you're willing, and we'll fix all that."

"Well, mistress," said Uli, "even so; but who would look after the housekeeping for me? There's a lot to do there."

"Ho, take a wife," said she.

"That's easily said," answered Uli; "but where should I find one that would be the right person for it and that would have me?"

"Don't you know of anybody?" asked the mistress.

At that Uli's voice stuck in his throat, and hesitating and embarrassed, he poked around on his plate with his fork. But Freneli said quickly that it seemed to her it was time to go, for Blackie must have eaten his oats long ago and

Uli had probably had enough by this time; they could continue their jokes another day.

Without listening to these words her aunt finally said, "Don't you know of anybody? For I do."

Again Uli turned saucer eyes upon her; Freneli said she was curious too. Her aunt, with undisturbed, playful ease, one hand on the table, her broad back rested comfortably against her chair, said, "Give a guess; you know her." Uli looked around at the walls; he could not find the right word; he felt as if he had a whole bagful of mashed potatoes in his mouth. Freneli tripped up impatiently behind her aunt, remarking that they ought to start out, as it was getting dark. Her aunt, however, did not listen to Freneli, but went on, "Can't you think of her? You know her well. She's a hard-working girl, but acts up a little at times, and if you don't quarrel you can have a very good life together." Thereupon she laughed very heartily, and looked first at one and then the other.

Then Uli looked up; but before he had gulped out an answer Freneli intervened, and said, "Go and hitch up; Auntie, one can carry a joke too far, too. I wish I'd never gone along. I don't know why I can't be left in peace. Yesterday other folks made me angry, and today you're worse still. That's not kind, Auntie."

Uli had stood up to go out; but his mistress said, "Sit down and listen. I'm in earnest; I've said to Joggeli many a time that there never were two people better fitted for each other than you two; it was as if you'd grown up for each other."

"But Auntie," cried Freneli, "for goodness gracious sake, do stop, or I'll run away. I won't be auctioned off like a cow. Wait till Christmas; then I'll get out of your sight, or even before, if I'm so displeasing to you. Why do you take so much useless pains to bring two people together that don't want each other? Uli cares for me just as much as I do for him, and the sooner we part company the gladder I'll be."

But now Uli's tongue was loosened and he said, "Freneli, don't be so angry with me; I can't help this. But this much let me tell you; even if you do hate me, I've loved you this long time, and wouldn't want a better wife. Any one would be happy with you; if you'll have me, I'd be only too happy."

"Oh, ho!" said Freneli, "now that you hear about the farm and that you'd get it in lease if you had a wife, all at once I'll just suit you. You're a cheerful fellow! If you only got the farm you'd marry a hussy from the gutter, or a fence-post, wouldn't you? But oh, ho ho!" she laughed scornfully, "you've struck the wrong girl; I don't have to have a husband; I don't want any, and least of all a man that would marry a lamp-wick if there was a little oil on it. If you won't start off I'll walk home alone," and with that she was about to dart out of the door.

But Uli caught her and held her with a strong arm, resist as she would, saying, "No, truly, Freneli, you wrong me. If I could have you, I'd go out into the wilderness, where I'd have to clear the whole land before I could plant it. It's true that when Elsie flirted so with me, the farm went to my head and I'd have married her just on that account. But I'd have committed a heavy sin; for even then you were in my heart, and I always liked to see you a hundred times better than her. Every time I saw her I was frightened; but when I met you my heart always jumped for joy. Just ask Johannes; I told him this morning that I didn't know where under the sun I could find a better wife than you."

"Let me go," cried Freneli, who had carried on like an angry cat during all this handsome speech and had not even refrained from pinching and scratching.

"I'll let you go," said Uli, who manfully bore the scratching and pinching; "but you mustn't suspect me of wanting you only in case I could be tenant on the farm. You must believe that I love you anyway."

"I make no promises," cried Freneli, and she pulled herself free with all her might, and fled to the other end of the table.

"Why, you act just like a wild-cat," cried her aunt. "I never saw such a girl. But now be sensible, come and sit down beside me. Will you come or not? I'll never say another kind word to you as long as I live if you won't sit down here a minute and keep still. Uli, order another bottle. Keep still now, girl, and don't interrupt me," continued her aunt, and she went on to tell how she should feel if they both went away; what evil days awaited her; shed painful tears over her own children, and said that she could still be made happy if it might turn out as she had thought it through in her sleepless nights. If two people could be happy together, they were the ones. She had often told Joggeli that she had never seen two people that understood each other so well in their work and were so helpful to each other. If they kept on in the same way they must become very prosperous. They would do whatever they could to help them, she and Joggeli. They weren't like some proprietors, who weren't happy unless a tenant was ruined on their place every other year, and who spent sleepless nights planning to raise the rent when the tenant was able to pay the whole amount on time, because they were afraid he had got it too cheap. Truly, they'd do by her as by their own children, and Freneli would have a dowry that no farmer's daughter need be ashamed of. But if that didn't suit her and Freneli carried on so, then she didn't know what to do; she'd rather never go home again. She wouldn't reproach her; but she surely hadn't deserved to have Freneli act so now; she had always done by her as she thought right. And now Freneli was behaving in this way just to grieve her — that she could see; she hadn't been the same to her for a long time. And the good woman wept right heartily.

"But, Auntie," said Freneli, "how can you talk so? You've been a mother to me; I've always looked on you as

such, and if I had to go through fire for you I wouldn't hesitate a minute. But I won't be forced upon such a puppy who doesn't want me. If I have to have a husband I want one who loves me and takes me for my own sake, not one that takes me along with the other cows as part of the lease."

"How can you talk so?" asked her aunt. "Didn't you hear him say he's loved you this long time?"

"Yes," said Freneli, "that's what they all say, one with another; but if they all choked on that lie there wouldn't be many weddings. He's no better than the rest, I guess; if you hadn't talked about the farm first, then you could have seen how much he'd have been in love with me. And it's not right of you to tell me nothing about all this, or to fling me plumb at his head like a pine-cone thrown to a sow. If you'd confided in me first I could have told you what's trumps with Uli. What he says is: 'Gold, I love you;' and then he expects us to hear: 'Girl, I love you.'"

"You're a queer Jenny," said her aunt, "and you act as if you was the daughter of a lord."

"That's just it, Auntie! Just because I'm only a poor girl, it's proper for me to hold myself high and not let myself be treated like a handful of fodder. I think I have more right to it than many a high-born girl, no matter whether she's the daughter of a lord or a farmer."

"But, Freneli," protested Uli, "how can I change that, and do I have to pay for it? You know well in your heart that I love you, and I knew just as little of what your aunt had in mind as you; and so it's not right of you to vent your anger on me."

"Ah," said Freneli, "now I begin to see that the whole thing was a put-up job; otherwise you wouldn't excuse yourself before I accused you. That's worse than ever, and I won't listen to another word; I won't let myself be caught like a fish in a net."

With that Freneli again tried to get up and run out; but her aunt held her fast by her bodice, saying that she was

the wildest and most suspicious creature under the sun. Since when did she set traps for her? It was true that she had wanted to visit her cousin about this affair, and for that reason she had taken them both along. But what she had in mind nobody knew, not even Joggeli, much less Uli. She had commissioned her cousin to worm Uli's secrets out of him, and it was true that Uli had praised Freneli to the skies, so that her cousin had told her that Uli would take Freneli any time — the sooner the better; but that Uli was afraid to say anything to Freneli for fear she'd hold up Elsie against him. At that she had thought that she would speak, if Uli was afraid to; for that Uli didn't suit the girl, nobody could convince her; her eyes weren't in the back of her head yet. So Uli couldn't help it at all.

"But then why did he come into the room today while I was packing up and want to give me a kiss? He never did that before."

"Oh," said Uli, "I'll just tell you. After I had talked with old master today you were in my mind more than ever, and I thought I'd give everything I had if I knew whether you loved me and would have me. I didn't know a thing about the farm. Then when I found you alone, something came over me, I didn't know what; I felt a sort of longing in my arm; I had to touch you and ask for a kiss. At first I thought I had had one; but then later I thought it couldn't have been, or else you wouldn't have pushed me out into the room so wildly. I thought you didn't care for me, and that made me so sad at heart that I wished Christmas was here and I could go away; indeed I was going far, far away down into Italy, so that nobody would ever hear anything of me. And I feel so still, Freneli, if you won't have me. I don't want the lease, and I'll go away and away, as far as my feet will carry me, and no one shall ever know where I've gone."

He had stood up and stepped up to Freneli, and tears stood in his honest eyes; while they were rolling down her aunt's cheeks. Then Freneli looked up at him and her

eyes grew moist, though mockery and defiance still quivered about her mouth; but the repressed love broke through and began to send its shining rays out of her eyes, while her maidenly reluctance cast up her lips as bulwark against her surrender to his manly insistence. And while her eyes radiated love, still there came forth from behind the pouting lips the mocking words: "But, Uli, what will Stini say, if you're after another girl so soon? Won't she sing to you:

'A dove-cot would be just as true:
It's off with the old love, on with the new.'"

"But how can you play the fool with him so?" queried her aunt; "you see he's in earnest. If I was in his place I'd turn my back on you and tell you to whistle for me if you wanted me."

"He's free to do it, Auntie, and you don't know but I wish he would," said Freneli.

"No you don't," retorted her aunt; "I can hear that in your voice. And Uli, if you're not a stupid, you'll put your arms around her this minute; she won't shove you out into the room now, trust me."

But her aunt was mistaken. Once more the girl summoned all her strength, and whirled about so sharply that she almost shook off Uli again. But her strength did not hold out. She fell on Uli's breast and broke out in loud, almost convulsive weeping. The two others almost became frightened, as her sobbing seemed to have no end; they did not understand what was the matter. Uli comforted her as well as he could, and begged her not to go on so: if she'd rather not have him, he could go away, he wouldn't torment her. Her aunt was vexed at first and told her she was silly; that in her day girls hadn't put a hound to shame with their howling when they found a sweetheart. But then she became alarmed and said she wouldn't force the girl; if she was unwilling to have Uli she could do what she liked for all of her. Only for goodness sake she shouldn't go on so; the innkeepers might wonder what was happening.

Finally Freneli recovered enough to tell them just to leave her in peace; that she would try to compose herself. She had been a poor orphan all her life, and an outcast from childhood. No father had ever taken her on his lap, no mother ever kissed her; never had she had a breast to lay her head on. She had often thought it wouldn't be hard even to die, if only she could sit on somebody's lap and clasp somebody around the neck; but during all her childhood nobody had loved her, and she had had no home. She couldn't say how often she had wept alone. Her longing had always and always been to have somebody that she could love with all her heart and all her soul; to find somebody on whose breast she could hide her head at all times. She had never found a chum to satisfy her longing. And so when folks talked to her about marrying, she had thought she never would unless she could believe from the bottom of her heart that she had found the breast on which to lay her head in joy and sorrow, and which would be true to her in life and death. But she had found none that she could have such faith in. She loved Uli, had loved him long, more than she could say; but this faith in him she hadn't yet been able to have. And if she was deceived this time, if Uli's love and loyalty weren't true and genuine, then her last hope would be gone, then she'd never find the breast she sought, and would have to die unhappy. That was why she was so afraid, and she begged them on her knees to leave her in peace, so that she could consider thoroughly what was best for her to do. Oh, they didn't know how a poor orphan felt, that had never sat on her father's lap, or been kissed by her mother!

"You're a dear silly child," said her aunt, wiping her wet cheeks. "If I'd known that that's what you wanted I certainly wouldn't have grudged you an extra kiss now and then. But why didn't you say so? A body can't think of everything; when you have to plan all day long what to give your folks to eat, you don't stop to think about who's to be kissed."

Uli said he had deserved it; it only served him right, and he ought to have known that it would be so. But if she could look into his heart she'd see how much he loved her and how honestly. He wouldn't excuse himself; he had thought of marrying several times, but never had he loved any one as he did her. But he wouldn't coerce her; he would simply have to be content to accept her will in the matter.

"Why, you can just hear," said her aunt, "how much he loves you. Come, take your glass and drink health to Uli, and promise him that you'll be the wife of the leaseholder of Slough Farm."

Freneli stood up, took her glass and drank the health, but made no promise, only begging them to leave her in peace for today, and say no more about it; tomorrow, if must be, she would give her answer.

"You're a queer Jenny," said her aunt. "Well then, Uli, hitch up; our folks will wonder where we are."

Outside, the stars were twinkling against the dark-blue background; small wisps of white mist hovered over the moist meadows; single streamers rose along the valley slopes; mild breezes rocked the faded foliage; here and there on the pasture a forgotten cow tinkled her bell for her forgetful master; here and there a frolicsome lad sent his merry cry flying over hill and dale. The commotion of the day and the driving lulled the old woman into deep sleep, and Uli, with tense muscles, held in the wildly racing Blackie to a moderately fast pace; Freneli was alone in the wide world. As far off in the distant sky the stars floated in the limitless space of the unfathomable blue ocean, each by itself in its solitary course, so she felt herself again to be the poor, solitary, forsaken girl in the great turmoil of the universe. When she had left aunt and uncle, when they were dead, she would have no one left on earth; no house for a refuge in time of sickness; no one to tell her troubles to; no eye to laugh and weep with her; no person that would weep when she should die; yes, perhaps no one who would

escort her coffin to that narrow, cold resting-place that they would some day have to assign her. She was alone; solitary and forsaken she was to wander through the turmoil of the world to her lonely grave; perhaps a long journey through many, many lonely years, more bowed, more discouraged and powerless from year to year — an old, withered, despised creature, to whom scarce any would give refuge, even though begged for it in the name of the Lord. New sorrow quivered in her heart, lamentations were about to well up. Why did the good Father, who was called Love, let such poor children, who had nobody in the world, live, to be cast out in childhood, seduced in their prime, despised in old age? But then she began to feel that she was sinning against God, who had given her more than many had, who had preserved her innocence to this day, and had so formed and developed her that an abundant living seemed secured to her if God preserved her health. Little by little, as the hill-tops and the tree-tops peeped out of the mist, so the love-tokens which God had visibly scattered through her life began to appear — how she had been guarded here and there, how she had enjoyed many more cheerful days than many, many poor children, and how she had found parents too, much better than other children had, who, if they had not taken her to their hearts like father and mother, had still loved her and so brought her up that she could face all people with the feeling that she was looked upon as a real human being. No, she might not complain of her good Father up yonder; she felt that His hand had been over her. And was His hand not over her still? Had He perhaps taken compassion on the poor lonely girl? Had He decreed, since she had remained faithful till then and tried to keep herself unspotted by sin, to satisfy now the longing of her heart, to give her a faithful breast to lay her head on — something of her own, so that one day somebody would weep at her death, somebody escort her on the sad road to the gruesome grave? Was it perhaps Uli, the loyal, skilful servant, whom she had loved so long in her

reserved heart; whom she could reproach with nothing save his mistake with Elsie, and that he too had been seized by the delusion that money makes happiness; who had so faithfully and honestly laid bare his heart and repented of his error? Was it not a strange dispensation that they had both come to this particular place, that Uli had not gone away before, that Elsie had had to marry, that the desire had come to her aunt to give the lease of the farm to Uli? Was it not wonderful how all that fitted in together; was not the Father's kind hand evident in it? Should she scorn what was offered her? Was it something hard or repulsive that was asked of her? Now her spirit unveiled its pictures, peopled the desolate future with them. Uli was her husband; she had taken root in life, in the broad world; they were the centre about which a great household revolved, circling about their will. In a hundred different forms this picture rose before her eyes, and ever fairer and lovelier became the harmony of its colors. She no longer knew that she was driving in the wagon; her heart felt as light and happy as if she were already breathing the air of that world where there is no more care, no more sorrow — but just then the wagon bumped over a stone.

Freneli did not feel it; but her aunt awoke with a long yawn and asked, finding it hard to collect her thoughts, "Where are we, hey? I haven't been asleep, I hope."

Uli said, "If you look sharply, you can see our light yonder through the trees."

"Gracious, how I have slept! I wouldn't have believed it. If only Joggeli doesn't scold because we're so late."

"It doesn't matter," said Uli; "and Blackie can rest tomorrow; we don't need him."

"Well, well," said his mistress, "then that's all the better. But when horses get home late and have to start out early, that's maltreatment. Just imagine how we'd feel if they did the same to us — run, run all the time, and no time for eating and sleeping."

As they heard the approaching wagon, all the inhabitants of Slough Farm rushed out of the doors with candles and lanterns, some to the horse, others to the wagon; even Joggeli limped up, saying, "I thought you wouldn't get here today, thought something had happened."

Chapter XXV

THE PLOT BEGINS TO UNRAVEL, AND AS IT IS ABOUT TO SNARL AGAIN, A GIRL KNOCKS OUT THE TANGLE WITH A BEECH CUDGEL

[Freneli's restless eagerness to give Uli her answer banishes sleep, and she rises before all the others, only to find Uli before her at the wash-trough, and there they plight their faith. The mistress broaches the subject of the lease to Joggeli, but he will not hear to it. Freneli, however, is not disturbed, but outlines the plan of action, which succeeds admirably. Now comes the son-in-law and makes a scene, but Freneli trumps his ace by getting word to Johannes, who, already suspicious of the cotton-dealer, is glad to have a chance to spoke his wheel for him. A frightful turmoil ensues, with Johannes pounding the table and threatening the cotton-dealer, while the latter, unterrified, calmly admits marrying Elsie for her money, and himself draws up a leasing plan which rather pleases Joggeli, but would exclude Uli. While the others are arguing about this plan, the son-in-law attempts a private understanding with Freneli, to the effect that he will further Uli's cause if she will be complaisant with him. Freneli snatches up a beech-wood stick and belabors him soundly, while he yells for help, and finally escapes through an open door. Freneli tells her story; the son-in-law sticks his head in at the door to say she lies, but the beech stick, hurled by Freneli's strong hand, strikes him full in the face, and, minus three teeth, he finally quits the field of battle, completely routed, strewing the path of his retreat with noisy but vain threats.]

Chapter XXVI

How Freneli and Uli set out and are finally wedded

From this point on affairs went much better than Uli had expected, and many a time he could not but think that he was faring better than he deserved and was forcibly reminded of what his old master had said — that a good name was veritable capital and worth more than gold and goods. The rent was reasonable; but the chief thing was the extras. Some things that he liked especially, to be sure, Johannes came and seized. That was only reasonable, he said, to balance up the corn and cherry brandy that his brother-in-law had talked them out of. The extras included not only the entire live-stock, utensils and dishes, but also the house-furnishings and the servants' beds. The appraisal was reasonable throughout, so that the receiver could not be ruined if the things ever had to be returned. There were some considerable reservations, but they could be overlooked in view of the low rent. Uli was to feed one cow for Joggeli, fatten two hogs, supply potatoes, sow one measure of flax-seed and two of hemp, and furnish a horse whenever they wanted to drive. If people are on good terms such reservations are seldom too heavy; but if misunderstandings arise, then every reservation becomes a stumbling-block.

Uli and Freneli could save most of their money and needed to buy very little; the promised dowry did not fail; they received a bed and a wardrobe as handsome as could be got in all the country round. Johannes, without waiting for their choice, sent them a handsome cradle, which Freneli would not admit for a long time, maintaining it was not meant for them.

* * * So in some anxiety of spirit they saw the time approach when Uli was to take over the lease, given to him chiefly through confidence in his ability and loyalty. First, however, he was to be married to Freneli. Since New Year's there had been talk of it; but the girl always had

excuses for delay. Now she had not had time to think it all over; now she had just been thinking it over and had decided it was better to wait another Sunday or two; again she said she wanted to enter on her duties as mistress immediately after the wedding, and not still be servant; or else the shoemaker had her Sunday shoes, and she couldn't go on wooden soles to the pastor to announce the marriage. So passed one Sunday after another. * * *

Then one Sunday, when the shoemaker had brought the shoes, the dear God sent a terrible snow-storm, such that no human being could take a dozen steps with open eyes, and a dark night, the thickest and blackest that ever was, interposed between heaven and earth. While the storm was at his height and snow and hail rattled against the windows and piled up a finger's length against the frames, while the wind whistled mournfully about the roof, darkness came in at the windows thick and gloomy, so that the lamp could scarcely prevail against it, the cats crawled shivering to the back of the stove, and the dog scratched at the kitchen door and crawled under the stove with his tail between his legs, Freneli at length said, " Now Uli, get ready and we'll go; now folks certainly won't be watching us." * * *

When they were ready and opened the kitchen door, Freneli had to make three attempts before she could get out, and Uli had to look for his hat on the other side of the kitchen. Her aunt began to wail and to implore them in God's name not to go; they would be killed! But Freneli summoned all her strength for a third attempt, and vanished in the snow-flurry; her aunt's lamentations died away unheard. It was really almost a break-neck undertaking, and Uli had to help the girl. With the wind directly in their faces, they often lost the road, had to stand still at times and look about them to see where they were and gather breath, or turn around to let the strongest gusts go by; it took them three-quarters of an hour to go the scant

fifteen minutes' walk to the parsonage. There they first shook off the snow as well as they could, then knocked on the door. But they knocked long in vain; the sound was swallowed up in the howling of the wind, which raged awesomely through the chimneys. Then Freneli lost patience; in place of Uli's reverent knock she now tried her own, and it was such that the indwellers started up from their seats and the pastor's wife cried, "Mercy on us, what's that?" But the pastor calmed her by saying that it was either a baptism or a wedding, only that, as usual, Mary had not heard their first knocks. While Mary answered the door he was lighting a light, so that the people need not wait long, and as soon as Mary opened the door to say, "There's two people here, Sir," he was already stepping out.

Back of the house door stood the two, Freneli behind Uli. The pastor, somewhat short, of middle age, but already venerable in appearance and with shrewd features that could be either very sharp or very pleasant, raised the light above his head, peered out with head bowed slightly forward, and cried at last, "Why, Uli, is it you, in such weather? And I suppose Freneli's behind you," he said, letting the light fall on her. "But dear me," he cried, "in such weather? And the good mistress let you go? Come, Mary," he called, "brush off these folks for me, and take this collar and dry it." Mary came up very willingly with her lamp.

Now the pastor's wife opened the door, her light in her hand, and said, "Bring them in here, why don't you? It's warmer than your study, and Freneli and I know each other right well." There stood Freneli now in the blaze of three lights, still between Uli and the door, not knowing what expression to assume. Finally she put a good face on a bad game, as the saying goes, came forward, and saluted the pastor and his wife quite properly, saying that her aunt bade her wish them good evening, and Joggeli too. All this Freneli said with the most innocent face in the world.

"But," said the pastor, "why do you come in such a storm? You might have lost your lives!"

"We couldn't manage it any other way," said Uli, who began to feel the man's duty of taking his wife's obstinacy on his own shoulders — a duty which one must eventually fulfil of necessity, either to avoid appearing hen-pecked or to hide the weakness of his wife. "We couldn't wait any longer," he continued, "as we wanted to ask the pastor to announce the affair here and there, so that it could be published next Sunday."

They were rather late for that, the pastor said; he didn't know whether the mail would reach both places before Sunday.

"I am sorry for that," said Uli; "I hadn't thought of it."

Freneli acted as if she had nothing to do with it, and talked quite interestedly with the pastor's wife about the flax, which had seemed so fine and still yielded so little when they combed it. When the formalities were over the pastor said to Uli, "And so you're to be tenant on Slough Farm? I'm glad of it. You're not like so many servants, that don't even look human, to say nothing of Christian; you act like a man and like a Christian too."

"Yes," said Uli, "why should I forget God? I need Him more than He does me, and if I forget Him can I hope that He will think of me when He bestows His gifts and His mercies?"

"Yes, Uli, that's fine," said the pastor, "and I think He has not forgotten you either. You have a good farm and I think you're getting a good wife."

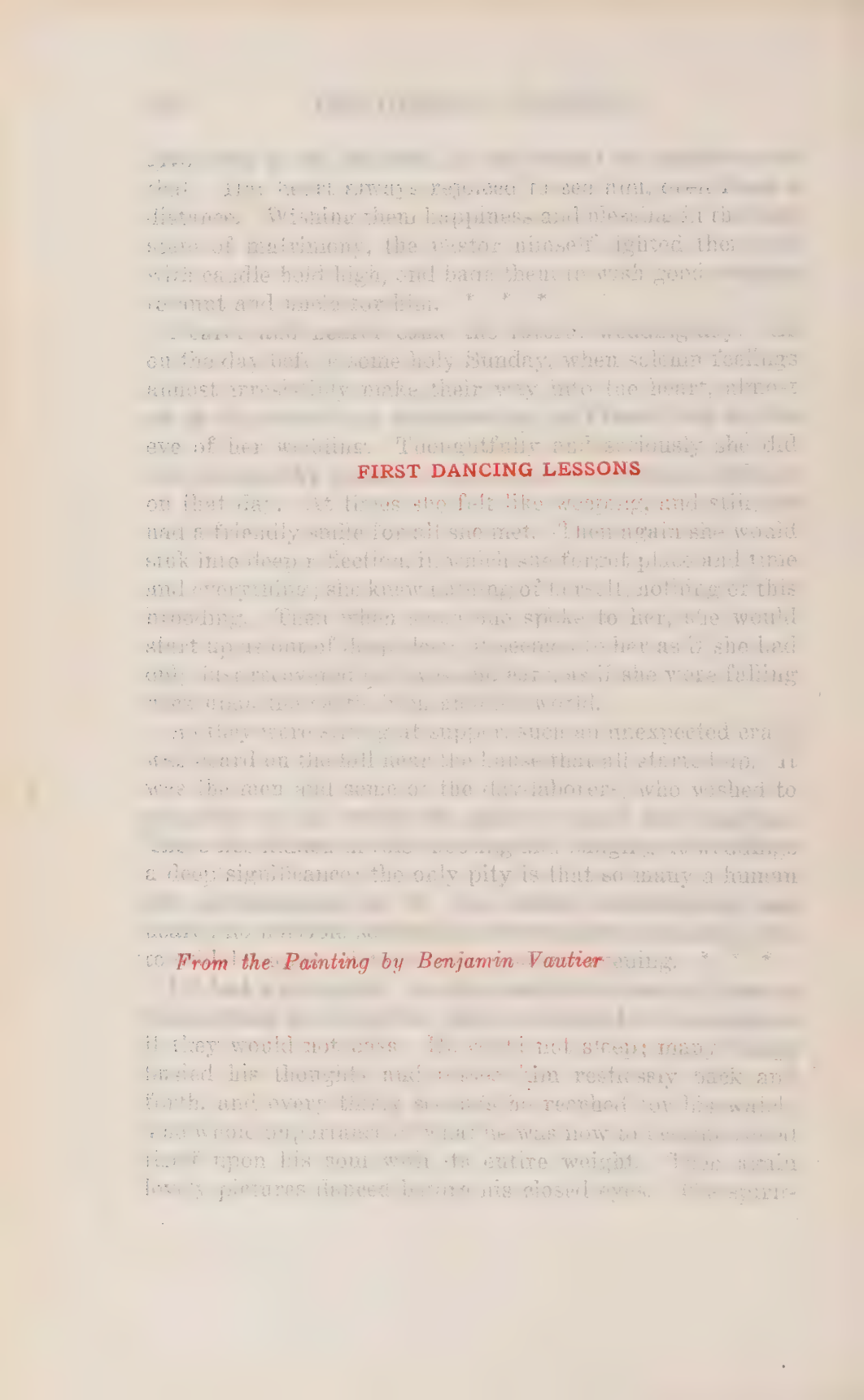
Here the maid came in with the plates to set the table. Freneli noticed it and stood up to go, although the hostess told them not to hurry, or, better still, to have supper with them. But Freneli said they must go or her aunt would think something had happened, thanked the pastor and asked him to promise that he would come to see them, although they were only leaseholders. They could always

give them a cup of coffee, if they would be satisfied with that. Her heart always rejoiced to see him, even from a distance. Wishing them happiness and blessing in the holy state of matrimony, the pastor himself lighted them out with candle held high, and bade them to wish good evening to aunt and uncle for him. * * *

Nearer and nearer came the fateful wedding-day. As on the day before some holy Sunday, when solemn feelings almost irresistibly make their way into the heart, almost as on the eve of her confirmation, so Freneli felt on the eve of her wedding. Thoughtfully and seriously she did her housework; perhaps she had never spoken so little as on that day. At times she felt like weeping, and still she had a friendly smile for all she met. Then again she would sink into deep reflection, in which she forgot place and time and everything; she knew nothing of herself, nothing of this brooding. Then when some one spoke to her, she would start up as out of deep sleep; it seemed to her as if she had only just recovered her eyes and ears, as if she were falling back upon the earth from another world.

As they were sitting at supper, such an unexpected crash was heard on the hill near the house that all started up. It was the men and some of the day-laborers, who wished to proclaim to the world the glory of their new masters. There lies hidden in this shooting and banging at weddings a deep significance; the only pity is that so many a human life is endangered by it. No hateful horn-blowing was heard; no horrible serenades, such as envy or enmity offer to bridal couples, disturbed the peaceful evening. * * *

Uli had a bad night. As they wanted to start at three in the morning the hours for sleep were few, but it seemed as if they would not pass. He could not sleep; many things busied his thoughts and tossed him restlessly back and forth, and every thirty seconds he reached for his watch. The whole importance of what he was now to become rolled itself upon his soul with its entire weight. Then again lovely pictures danced before his closed eyes. The spirit-



FIRST DANCING LESSONS

From the Painting by Benjamin Vautier

hour was not long past when he left his bed, in order to give the horse his fodder and to brush and curry him thoroughly. When he had finished this work he went to the well and began a similar task on himself. Then playful hands enfolded him and Freneli brought him her loving morning salute. A glad hope had drawn her to the well, and they lingered to caress each other in the cold morning air as if mild evening zephyrs were blowing. All anxiety and oppression forsook him now, and he hastened the preparations for their departure. Soon he could go into the house for the hot coffee which Freneli had made and for the white bread and cheese her aunt had provided. Little peace did the girl have at the table, for the fear of having forgotten something would not let her rest; again and again she looked over the bundle of her belongings, and even then her aunt's fur-lined shoes were nearly left behind. At last she stood there all in readiness, sweet and beautiful. The two maids, whom curiosity had drawn from their beds, encircled her with their lights, and were so absorbed in admiration that they forgot that oil makes spots and that fire kindles; a little more and Freneli, soaked in oil, would have gone up in flame. Alas, in the fleshy bosoms of the poor maids heaved the yearning: Oh, if they once had such pretty clothes, they would be as pretty as Freneli; and then they too could ride off to be married to such a handsome man!

Long before three o'clock they drove out into the cold, frosty morning. Amid question and answer the flickering stars paled and sought their sky-blue beds, and the good mother sun began to weave golden curtains about them out of sparkling rays of light, so that their chaste retirement, their innocent sleep, might not be sullied by the eyes of curious sinners. Jack Frost shook his curls more mightily; driven by the sun from the little stars to the dark bosom of the earth, away from his heavenly sweethearts, he tried to caress earthly ones, wanted to embrace Freneli and put his cold arms about the warm girl; his white breath was already playing in the tips of her cap. The girl shivered

and begged Uli to take refuge just a moment in a warm room; she was shaking through and through, and they would reach their destination soon enough.

It was one of the good old taverns whose proprietors do not change every year, but where one generation succeeds the other. The innkeepers, who were just sitting at their coffee as the bridal couple entered, recognized Uli at once. Now a very friendly salutation, and the couple must sit down and celebrate with them, whether or no. They were told not to make a fuss about it, everything was ready, and nothing was more grateful on such a cold morning than a cup of hot coffee. Freneli acted somewhat bashfully, for it seemed bold of her to sit down with them as if that was her home. But the hostess urged her until she sat down, surveyed her, and began to praise her to Uli, remarking what a pretty wife he had; there hadn't been a prettier one there this long time. She was glad he was doing so well; they had all been sorry when he went away; one always liked to see a friend get along well. Not that there weren't folks that couldn't bear to see it, but there weren't many such.

Uli asked whether she thought the pastor was up; he would go to him first. He surely would be, they thought, especially on a Friday, when folks usually came. Not that he was one of the earliest risers usually, for he liked to lie abed; but he was getting old and so that could be excused. But he had had a vicar during the winter, and he had never been in sight before eight; everybody had been vexed that they had to have such a lazy vicar. Here Uli asked whether it was customary to take the bride along. No, they said; folks seldom waited in the parsonage. Afterward a good many went back together to get the certificate. But the bashful ones, or those that thought the pastor would have cause to say something to them, would come right back to the inn, and only the lads would go for the certificate. After Freneli had declined to go along and had bidden Uli to let

his master know and send word to have his master and mistress come, he set out.

In his handsome dress and in the dark room the old pastor did not at first recognize him, but then was heartily rejoiced. "I heard," he said, "that you were doing well, were to get a fine lease and a good wife, and had saved a tidy sum. It gives me great joy to bless a marriage that I can hope will remain in the Lord. That you have saved something is not the chief thing; but you wouldn't have it, and people wouldn't have had so much confidence in you, if you were not honest and God-fearing, and that's what pleases me most of all. The things of the world and the things of the spirit are much closer to each other than most people believe. They think that in order to get along well in the world, you've got to hang up your Christianity on a nail. But it's just the reverse; that's what causes the everlasting complaint in the world; that's why most men make their beds so that they have to lie on nettles. Ask yourself if you would be as happy now if you had stayed a vagabond, despised by all. What do you think—what sort of a wedding would you have had? Just imagine what kind of a wife you would have got, and the prospects you would have had, and what people would have said when they saw you going to be married, and then see how it is today; reckon up the enormous difference. Or what do you think about it? Is blind fortune, accident, so-called luck, back of it all? Folks are always saying: 'I don't have any luck; you just can't do anything nowadays.' What do you think, Uli? Is it only luck? Would you have had this luck if you had stayed a vagabond? But the misfortune is just that people want to be happy through luck and not by God-fearing lives on which God's blessing rests. And so it's quite fitting that those who are only waiting for luck should be deceived by it, until they come to the knowledge that nothing depends on luck, but everything on the blessing of God."

"Yes, Your Reverence," said Uli, "I can't tell you how much happier I am now than when I was one of the rabble that run around the streets. But something depends on luck, too; for if I hadn't come to such a good master no good would have come of me."

"Uli, Uli," said the pastor, "was that luck or God's decree?"

"It's all the same, I think," answered Uli.

"Yes," said the pastor, "it is the same; but it's not a matter of indifference which you call it, as men think, and that's just where the difference lies. The man that talks of luck doesn't think of God, nor thank Him, nor seek His grace; he seeks luck of and in the world. He who speaks of God's providence thinks of Him, thanks Him, seeks to please Him, sees God's hand in everything; he knows neither bad nor good luck, but to him everything is God's good guidance, which is to lead him to blessedness. The different words are the expression of a different state of mind, a different view of life; that is why there is so much difference in the words, and it is important which one we use. And however good our intentions, still, when we talk of luck, it makes us frivolous or discontented; but if we speak of God's providence, then these words themselves awaken thoughts in us and direct our eyes to God."

"Well, yes, Your Reverence," said Uli, "you're about right in that, and I'll bear it in mind."

"I hope you will come back here with your bride after the service?"

"Very willingly, if you wish it," said Uli; "but I'm afraid we shall keep you from your work."

"No one does that," said the pastor; "for it is not only my office, but also my pleasure, to speak on serious occasions a serious word to hearts in which I can hope for good soil that will bear fruit. What the pastor says on such occasions is not so soon forgotten."

Meanwhile Freneli had taken off the fur-lined shoes and put on the proper cap, and with her own hands the hostess

had fastened on the wreath. It was made in the Langental fashion, she said. "But whatever fashion it is, it's becoming to you," she continued.

The bells began to peal and Freneli's heart to beat loudly; her eyes grew fairly dim with dizziness. The hostess brought her aromatic salts, rubbed her temples with something, and said, "You mustn't take it so hard, girlie, we all have to go through with it. But go now in God's name; the pastor doesn't wait long on a Friday; he's a great one for hurrying."

Uli took his Freneli by the hand and walked with her toward the church; solemnly the solemn peals echoed in their hearts; for the sexton rang the bells with all his skill, so that the clappers struck on both edges, and not as if they were lame, now on one edge, now on the other. As they came to the churchyard, the grave-digger was just busy at a grave, and it was quiet about him; no sheep, no goat came and desecrated man's last resting-place; for in this village the churchyard was no pasture for unclerical animals.

Suddenly an irresistible melancholy came over Freneli. The venerable mound, the digging of the new grave, woke gloomly thoughts. "That's no good omen," she whispered; "they are digging a grave for one of us."

Before the church stood a baptismal party, one godmother holding a child on her arm. "That means a childbed for one of us," whispered Uli, to comfort Freneli.

"Yes, that I'm to die in one," she answered; "that I must leave my happiness for the cold grave."

"Just remember," said Uli, "that the dear God does everything and that we mustn't be superstitious, but believing. That our graves will be dug some day is certain; but that digging a grave means death to those who come along I never heard. Just think how many people see a grave being dug; if all of them had to follow soon, think what a lot of deaths there'd be."

"Oh, forgive me," said Freneli; "but the more important a journey is the more alarmed the poor soul gets and wants to know what will be the outcome, and so takes every encounter as an omen, bad or good; do you remember when you did the like?"

Then Uli pressed her hand and said, "You're right; but let us put our trust in God and not worry. What He shall do to us, or give or take, is well done."

They entered the church softly and hesitatingly; went separately to left and right; saw a child taken into the covenant of the Lord; thought how beautiful it was to be permitted to commend such a tender and feeble being, body and soul, to the especial care of its Saviour, and how great a load it must take from the parents' breasts, when they received in the baptism the assurance that the Lord would be with them and let them feed the child with His spirit, as the mother fed it with her milk. They joined very reverently in the prayers, and thought how seriously they would take it when they should have to promise as godparents to see to it that a child should be brought to the Lord. The customary collect was lost upon them in the importance of the serious moment that came nearer and nearer. When the pastor stepped forward from behind the baptismal fount, when Uli had taken Freneli by the hand, and they had stepped forward to the bench, both sank to their knees, far anticipating the ceremony, held their hands in fervent clasp, and with all their soul and all their heart and all their strength they prayed and promised what the words bid them — yes, and much more that gushed forth from their true hearts. And when they arose, they felt exceedingly firm and cheerful; both felt that they had won a great treasure for their whole life, which must make them happy, which none could take from them by force or guile, and with which they must remain united to all eternity.

When outside, Uli begged his bride to go with him to the pastor, to get the certificate. Abashed, Freneli tried to decline, under the pretext that she did not know him, that

it was unnecessary, and so on. But she went none the less, and no longer timorous, like a thief in the night, but as well becomes a happy woman at the side of an honest man. Freneli knew how to take herself in hand.

With kindness they were received by the pastor, a venerable, tall, lean gentleman. There were not many who, like him, knew how to mingle seriousness and graciousness, so that hearts opened before him as if touched with a magic wand.

When he had looked at Freneli, he asked, "What do you think, Uli? Was it due to luck or God's guidance that you got this little wife?"

"Your Reverence," said Uli, "you are right; I think her a gift of God."

"And you, little wife, of what mind are you?"

"I too have no other thought but that the dear God brought us together," said Freneli.

"I think so too," said the pastor; "God willed it; never forget that. But why did He bring you two together? That one should make the other happy, not only here, but also yonder — don't forget that either. Marriage is God's sanctuary on earth, in which men are to consecrate and purify themselves for Heaven. You are good people; be pious and upright; but you both have faults. In you, Uli, I know one which steadily gains power over you; it is avarice. You, Freneli, must have some too, but I do not know them. These faults will appear little by little, and when a fault becomes visible in you, Uli, your wife will be the first to see it, and you can tell that by her face; and, on the other hand, you can see what comes out in Freneli, and she can read it in your expression. One almost becomes the other's mirror. In this mirror, Uli, you should recognize your faults, and try to put them from you out of love for your wife, because she suffers most from them; and you, wife, should assist him in all gentleness, but should recognize your own faults too and try to conquer them for Uli's sake, and he will help you too. If this labor becomes

too heavy for love, then God gives us child after child, and each is an angel come to sanctify us; each brings us new lessons of how to appear rightly before God, and new desires, to the end that the child be prepared for a sacrifice that shall be holy and well-pleasing to God. And the more you live together in this spirit, the happier you shall be in Heaven and on earth; for, believe me, true worldly happiness and heavenly happiness are to be found on exactly the same road. Believe me: the dear God has brought you together to help each other gain Heaven, to be prop and staff to each other on the narrow, toilsome way that leads to eternal life, to level and lighten that way for each other through love, meekness, and long-suffering — for it is rough and thorny. Now when gloomy days come, when faults break out in one or the other, or both, then think not of bad luck, as if that made you unhappy, but of the dear God, who has long seen all these faults and who has brought you together just so that one should cure the other and help him to mend his ways; that is the purpose and the task of your marriage. And as love sent the Saviour and led Him to the cross, so love must be active in you too; that is the power which exceeds all others, which cures and betters. With cursing and scolding, with threats and blows one can put down the other, but not better him so that he can be well-pleasing to God. Usually, the worse one grows, the worse the other becomes too, and so they help each other down to hell. So never forget: God has brought you together, and He will demand each of the other. Man, He will say, where is your wife's soul? Woman, He will say, where is your husband's soul? Act so that you can answer with one voice: Lord, here are we both, here at Thy right hand. Forgive me, little wife, that I have spoken so seriously to you this morning. But it is better that you be so talked to now, than later, after Uli is dead, and men think him ruined by your fault; and for Uli too it is better now than later, when he should have brought you to the grave. But

this I think neither of you would have done, for you both look to me as if God and men might take pleasure in you."

When Freneli heard him speak of dying, the tears rushed to her eyes, and with agitated voice she said, "O, Your Reverence, there is no thought of offense. I give you a hundred thousand thanks for your beautiful lesson; I'll think of it as long as I live. And it would make me very glad if you would some time come into our district and visit us, to see how your words bear fruit in us, and that we haven't forgotten them. The pastor said he would surely do so as soon as he came into their district, and that might very easily happen. He considered them, although they did not live in his parish, as quite half his sheep, and they might depend upon it that if they prospered and were happy, nobody would rejoice more than he. And if he could serve them in any way, let it be what it would, and if it were in his power, they must surely come to him; it would be a pleasure to him.

Thereupon they took their leave and all felt very happy and cheerful at heart. A comforting, warming feeling had been aroused such as all people ought to feel for each other at every meeting; then it would be beautiful on God's fair earth. "Isn't that the friendliest gentleman?" said Freneli as they went away; "he takes things seriously and still he is so kind; I could listen to him all day long and never get tired of it."

When they reached the inn the guests had not arrived, only the message that Johannes would come soon, but that his wife could not very well get away. Then Freneli cried, "You must go for her; drive up there, it's not so very far; if you drive fast, you can be back in half an hour."

"I don't like to overwork Blackie; he has enough trotting to do today," answered Uli. "The host will probably lend a horse for that little distance."

So it was done, and quite fortunately. Johannes had not yet started, and his wife was very dubious about sitting in the tavern on a work-day, unless there were a christening; what would folks say? He should have come to them with

his wife, instead of running up a bill there in the tavern; they would have had enough for them to eat and drink.

He knew that well, said Uli; but that would have been presuming, and the distance was too great beside, for they were going back today; he had his hands full now. But he begged that they would come; otherwise he would have to think they were ashamed of them.

"What are you thinking of, Uli?" exclaimed the mistress; "why, you know how much we think of you. I ought to stay away now, just because you could think such a thing." At the same time she was getting ready, however, but would not permit her daughter to go along, whom Uli would have liked to invite too. "I should think so!" said she; "and the cat and the dog to boot; that *would* be fine! It's presuming enough for me to come. Just wait, you'll be able to use your money in other ways — housekeeping has a pretty big maw."

With eagerness Freneli had watched for them from the corner of the inn. All that passed could not take their eyes from her, and when they were past they would ask, "Whose bride is that? I haven't seen a prettier girl in a long time." Through the whole village went the news of the pretty bride, and whoever could take the time or had any pretext, went by the inn.

At last Uli came driving up and with great friendliness Freneli welcomed them. "Well, here you've got to be wife, haven't you?" cried the old mistress; "God bless you!" and stretched out her plump hand to Freneli. "I just thought you'd make a couple; no two could have suited each other better."

"Yes, but there wasn't anything at the time; only on the way home they began to torment me, and I believe that was your fault, too," said Freneli, turning to Johannes and offering him her hand. "But you just wait; I'll make war on you, for discussing me so behind my back. Nice customers you are! And if you do that to me any more, I'll

pay you back; just wait. We'll talk about you behind your backs, too."

Johannes answered, and Freneli met him again with well-chosen playful words. When she had gone out for a moment, the old mistress said, "Uli, you've got an amazingly well-mannered wife; she can talk well enough to suit a manor-house, and the best of it is that she understands her work just as well; you don't always find the two together. Look out for her; you'll never get her match again!" Then Uli too began to sing her praises with tears in his eyes, until Freneli came back.

As the conversation suddenly halted at her entrance, she looked roguishly at them all in turn, and said, "There you've been talking about me again behind my back and my left ear tingled; you just wait! Uli, is it nice to begin accusing me that way, when I turn my back for just a minute?"

"He didn't accuse you," said the old mistress, "just the opposite; but I told him to look out for you, for he'd never get your match again. Oh, if men only knew how the second wife often turns out, they'd be more careful of the first! Not that I can complain. My husband I love and value; I couldn't get a better one, and he allows me all I want; but I see how it goes elsewhere."

"I was listening hard," answered Johannes; "but you ended up all right. You're right! In some places the women have a hard time, in others the men; it always depends on where there's understanding and then the belief that there's a God in Heaven. Where there's no belief, evil is king."

Hereupon they were invited into the back room. There the soup was already served, a quart of wine was on the table, and beside it a little pot of sweet tea. She thought she'd make tea right off, said the hostess; then anybody could take it that wanted to; some liked it, some didn't. With unfeigned friendliness Freneli played the hostess, filled the glasses, passed them around, and urged her guests

to empty them; all felt comfortable and at home. Uli sat down near the master and asked him this and that — how to arrange his stables; what he thought it paid best to plant; when he sowed this and that; what this or that soil was best for. Johannes answered like a father, then asked in his turn, and Uli gave his experience.

At first the women listened; but then Freneli's heart overflowed with questions and she sought advice about the hundred and one things in which a farmer's wife ought to be past-master; told how she had done things heretofore, but wondered whether they could not be done better and more profitably. Joyfully the old mistress revealed her secrets, but often said, "I think you do it better; I must try that too." The comfortable homeliness of the party lured in host and hostess, sensible people, and both helped to advise and discuss what was best, and showed their pleasure in much that they heard. And the more they heard the more desire to learn did Uli and Freneli display and the more humble did they become; they harkened to the experiences of the older people and impressed them upon their memories, not burdened with useless things.

The afternoon passed by without their knowing it. All at once the sun cast a golden beam into the room, and all that was in it floated transfigured in its light. They started up in alarm at the unexpected light, which almost seemed to come from a sudden conflagration. But the hostess bade them to be at ease; that was only the sunlight; the sun always shone in there in the spring before it set.

"Mercy, is it so late?" cried Freneli; "we must go, Uli."

"I didn't want to hurry you," said the hostess; "the moon will come up before it's dark."

"How fast this afternoon went by?" said Johannes' wife. "I don't know as I ever remember time going so fast."

"I feel the same way," said the hostess. "This wedding was something different from that of so many young

couples who are so bored they don't know what to do except drink and play cards, and make you so tired that you're glad when you see their backs. Why, sometimes I feel, when I see a lad who can't do anything but curse on his wedding-day, and who sticks out his borrowed pipe as if he wanted to pull down the moon, that I'd like to give him a punch in the head, so that he'd have it where other folks have it, and learn to talk like other folks."

The old mistress gave Freneli her hand and said, "You've grown very dear to me, as God lives, and I won't let you go away until you promise me to come back to us real soon."

"Very gladly," said Freneli, "if it's possible. I've been feeling, too, as if I was talking to a mother; and if we only lived nearer, I'd come only too often. But we have a big place and shan't be able to leave it much, Uli and I. But you come to see us — you must promise me that; you have grown-up children and you know your house will be all right even if you are away."

"Yes, I'll come to see you, I promise. I've often said to Johannes that I wondered what Slough Farm was like. And listen, if you should want a godmother some time, don't take the trouble to go a long ways for one. I know one that won't refuse."

"That would be good news," said Freneli, and plucked at a ribbon; "I won't forget it, and will think of it if the time ever comes; you can never know what may happen."

"Oh, yes, just about," laughed the other, "and then we'll see whether you care for us or not."

Meanwhile Uli had paid the account, ordered the horse hitched up, and now filled all the glasses and pressed them to drink a farewell glass. Now the host came in with an extra bottle and said he wanted to do something too and not have his drinks all paid for. He was glad that they had been with him and he would be willing to put up a bottle of his best every Friday if such couples would come to be married; he had had his joy of them. When he heard that

the bill had been paid, Johannes insisted that the host bring another bottle at his expense; and the stars were shining in the sky when, after a most affectionate farewell, such as unrelated people seldom bid one another, the spirited Blackie swiftly pulled a happy couple away — toward Paradise.

Yes, dear Reader, Freneli and Uli are in Paradise — that is, they live in unclouded love, blessed by God with four boys and two girls; they live in growing prosperity, for the blessing of God is their luck; their name has good repute in the land, and far and wide they stand in high esteem; for their aspiration is high, so high as to try to write their names in Heaven. But not in a day, but after many a severe conflict did they reach the level road and become certain of the goal.

FRITZ REUTER

THE BRÄSIG EPISODES FROM UT MINE STROMTID*

TRANSLATED BY M. W. MACDOWALL

EDITED AND ABRIDGED BY EDMUND VON MACH, PH.D.

[UT MINE STROMTID: A STORY OF MY YOUTH, depicts the joys and sorrows of a North German country community during the lean years of the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Human passions rent the hearts of men then as now. Nobility of soul distinguished some, and was lacking in many. Education was not universal, but common sense perhaps rather frequent. The best road to a happy life, however, was then as always, a kindly heart, a strict sense of justice, and a dash of unconscious humor. This lucky combination endeared Uncle Bräsig to everyone, and enabled him to make his blustering way cheerfully, yet serenely conscious of all joys and sorrows, amid the vicissitudes of life. He understood the human heart, whether it beat in the breast of a child or a tired old man, of a villain or of a loving wife. Nobody, however, was dearer to him than Nina and Lina Nüssler, his god-children. And naughty little girls these angelic twins were too, without respect for grandfather's peruke or grandmother's Sunday cap. They placed them on their own curly locks, and danced the "Kringelkranz-Rosendanz," and in so doing broke Mina's favorite toy-jar. In their eagerness to have it mended they ran from the house.]

JUST as the children entered the yard a little man came in at the gate. And this little man had a red face, and a very imposing red nose which he always held cocked up in

* Permission Bernhard Tauchnitz, Leipzig.

the air. He wore a square cap of no particular color with a tassel in front, and a long-tailed, loose, gray linen-coat. He always kept his feet turned out in an exaggerated first position which made his short legs look as if they were fastened to his body in the wrong way. He had striped trousers and long boots with yellow tops. He was not stout, and yet he was by no means thin, in fact his figure was beginning to lose its youthful proportions.

The children walked on, and when they had got near enough for the farm-bailiff — for such was the calling of the little man — to see what they were wearing, he stood still, and raised his bushy yellow eye-brows till they were quite hidden under his pointed cap, treating them as if they were the most beautiful part of his face, and must therefore be put away in a safe place out of all danger: "Bless me!" cried he. "What's the matter? What on earth have you been about? Why you've got the whole of your old grandparent's Sunday-finery on your heads!" The two little girls allowed themselves to be deprived of their borrowed plumes without remonstrance, and showing the broken jar, said that the wheel-wright was to mend it. "What!" exclaimed Mr. farm-bailiff Bräsig — that was the way he liked to be addressed — "is it possible that there is such insummate folly in the world? Lina, you are the eldest and ought to have been wiser; and, Mina, don't cry any more, you are my little god-child, and so I'll give you a new jar at the summer-fair. And now get away with you into the house." He drove the little girls before him, and followed carrying the peruke in one hand and the cap in the other.

When he found the sitting-room empty, he said to himself: "Of course, every one's out at the hay. Well, I ought to be looking after my hay too, but the little roundheads have made such a mess of these two bits of grandeur, that they'd be sure to get into a scrape if the old people were to see what they've been after; I must stay and repair the mischief that has been done." With that he pulled out

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FRITZ REUTER

the pocket-comb that he always carried about with him to comb his back-hair over to the front of his head, and so cover the bald place that was beginning to show. He then set to work at the peruke, and soon got that into good order again. But how about the cap? "What in the name of wonder have you done to this, Lina? It's morally impossible to get it back to the proper *fassong*. Ah—let me think. What's the old lady like on Sunday afternoons? She has a good bunch of silk curls on each side of her face, then the front of the cap rises about three inches higher than the curls; so the thing must be drawn more to the front. She hasn't anything particular in the middle, for her bald head shows through, but it always goes into a great bunch at the back where it sticks out in a mass of frills. The child has crushed that part frightfully, it must be ironed out." He put his clenched fist into the cap and pulled out the frills, but just as he thought he was getting them into good order, the string that was run through a caser at the back of the frilled mass gave way, and the whole erection flattened out. "Faugh!" he cried, sending his eye-brows right up in the air. "It wasn't half strong enough to keep it firm. Only a bit of thread! And the ends won't knot together again! God bless my soul! whatever induced *me* to meddle with a cap? But, wait a bit, I'll manage it yet." He thrust his hand into his pocket, and drew out a quantity of string of different sizes, for like every farm-bailiff who was worth anything he always carried a good supply of such things about with him. He searched amongst his store for some thing that would suit the case in hand. "Whip-cord is too thick; but this will do capitally," and then he began to draw a piece of good strong pack-thread through the caser. It was a work of time, and when he had got about half of it done, there was a knock at the door; he threw his work on the nearest chair, and called out: "Come in."

The door opened, and Hawermann entered with his little girl in his arms. Bräsig started up. "What in the — " he

began solemnly, then interrupting himself, he went on eagerly: "Charles Hawermann, where have you come from?" "From a place, Bräsig, where I have nothing more to look for," said his friend. "Is my sister at home?" "Every one's out at the hay; but what do you mean?" "That it's all up with me. All the goods that I possessed were sold by auction the day before yesterday, and yesterday morning"—here he turned away to the window—"I buried my wife." "What? what?" cried the kind-hearted old farm-bailiff, "good God! your wife. Your dear little wife?" and the tears ran down his red face. "Dear old friend, tell me how it all happened." "Ah, how it all happened?" repeated Hawermann, and seating himself, he told the whole story of his misfortunes as shortly as possible.

Meanwhile, Lina and Mina approached the strange child slowly and shyly, stopping every now and then, and saying nothing, and then they went a little nearer still. At last Lina summoned courage to touch the sleeve of the stranger's frock, and Mina showed her the bits of her jar: "Look, my jar is broken." But the little girl looked round the room uneasily, till at last she fixed her great eyes on her father.

"Yes," said Hawermann, concluding his short story, "things have gone badly with me, Bräsig; I still owe you thirty pounds, don't ask for it now, only give me time, and if God spares my life, I'll pay you back every farthing honestly." "Charles Hawermann, Charles Hawermann," said Bräsig, wiping his eyes, and blowing his imposing nose, "you're—you're an ass! Yes," he continued, shoving his handkerchief into his pocket with an emphatic poke, and holding his nose even more in the air than usual, "you're every bit as great an ass as you used to be!" And then, as if thinking that his friend's thoughts should be led into a new channel, he caught Lina and Mina by the waist-band and put them on Hawermann's knee, saying: "There, little round-heads, that's your uncle." Just as if

Lina and Mina were playthings and Hawermann were a little child who could be comforted in his grief by a new toy. He, himself, took Hawermann's little Louisa in his arms and danced about the room with her, his tears rolling down his cheeks the while. After a short time he put the child down upon a chair, upon the very chair on which he had thrown his unfinished work, and right on the top of it too.

In the meanwhile the household had come back from the hay-field, and a woman's clear voice could be heard outside calling to the maids to make haste: "Quick, get your hoop and pails, it'll soon be sunset, and this year the fold's* rather far off. We must just milk the cows in the evening. Where's your wooden-platter, girl? Go and get it at once. Now be as quick as you can, I must just go and have a look at the children." A tall stately woman of five-and-twenty came into the room. She seemed full of life and energy, her cheeks were rosy with health, work, and the summer air, her hair and eyes were bright, and her forehead, where her chip-hat had sheltered it from the sun, was white as snow. Any one could see the likeness between her and Hawermann at first sight; still there was a difference, she was well-off, and her whole manner showed that she would work as hard from temperament as he did from honor and necessity.

To see her brother and to spring to him were one and the same action: "Charles, brother Charles, my second father," she cried throwing her arms round his neck; but on looking closer at him, she pushed him away from her, saying: "What's the matter? You've had some misfortune! What is it?"

Before he had time to answer his sister's questions, her husband, Joseph Nüssler, came in, and going up to Hawermann shook hands with him, and said, taking as long to

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* *Translator's note.* In Mecklenburg the cows are always milked in the fields.

get out his words as dry weather does to come: "'Good-day, brother-in-law; won't you sit down?'' "Let him tell us what's wrong," interrupted his wife impatiently. "Yes," said Joseph, "sit down and tell us what has happened. Good-day, Bräsig; be seated, Bräsig." Then Joseph Nüssler, or as he was generally called, young Joseph, sat down in his own peculiar corner beside the stove. He was a tall, thin man, who never could hold himself erect, and whose limbs bent in all sorts of odd places whenever he wanted to use them in the ordinary manner. He was nearly forty years old, his face was pale, and almost as long as his way of drawling out his words, his soft blond hair, which had no brightness about it, hung down equally long over his forehead and his coat collar. He had never attempted to divide or curl it. When he was a child his mother had combed it straight down over his brow, and so he had continued to do it, and whenever it had looked a little rough and unkempt, his mother used to say: "Never mind, Josy, the roughest colt often makes the finest horse." Whether it was that his eyes had always been accustomed to peer through the long hair that overhung them, or whether it was merely his nature cannot be known with any certainty, but there was something shy in his expression, as if he never could look anything full in the face, or come to a decision on any subject, and even when his hand went out to the right, his mouth turned to the left. That, however, came from smoking, which was the only occupation he carried out with the slightest perseverance, and as he always kept his pipe in the left corner of his mouth, he, in course of time, had pressed it out a little, and had drawn it down to the left, so that the right side of his mouth looked as if he were continually saying "prunes and prism," while the left side looked as if he were in the habit of devouring children.

There he was now seated in his own particular corner by the stove, and smoking out of his own particular corner of his mouth, and while his lively wife wept in sympathy

with her brother's sorrow, and kissed and fondled him and his little daughter alternately, he kept quite still, glancing every now and then from his wife and Hawermann at Bräsig, and muttering through a cloud of tobacco smoke: "It all depends upon what it is. It all depends upon circumstances. What's to be done now in a case like this?"

Bräsig had quite a different disposition from young Joseph, for instead of sitting still like him, he walked rapidly up and down the room, then seated himself upon the table, and in his excitement and restlessness swung his short legs about like weaver's shuttles. When Mrs. Nüssler kissed and stroked her brother, he did the same; and when Mrs. Nüssler took the little child and rocked it in her arms, he took it from her and walked two or three times up and down the room with it, and then placed it on the chair again, and always right on the top of the grandmother's best cap.

"Bless me!" cried Mrs. Nüssler at last, "I quite forgot. Bräsig, *you* ought to have thought of it. You must all want something to eat and drink!" She went to the blue cupboard, and brought out a splendid loaf of white household bread and some fresh butter, then she went out of the room and soon returned with sausages, ham and cheese, a couple of bottles of the strong beer that was brewed on purpose for old Mr. Nüssler, and a jug of milk for the children. When everything was neatly arranged on a white table cloth, she placed a seat for her brother, and lifting her little niece, chair and all, put her beside her father. Then she set to work and cut slices of bread, and poured out the beer, and saw that there was enough for everybody.

"I'll be ready to give you something presently," she said, stroking her little girls' flaxen heads fondly, "but I must see to your little cousin first. Here's a chair for you, Bräsig — Come, Joseph." "All right," said Joseph, blowing a last long cloud of smoke out of the left corner of his mouth, and then dragging his chair forward, half sitting on it all the time. "Charles," said Bräsig, "I can recommend these sausages. Your sister, Mrs. Nüssler, makes

them most capitally, and I've often told my housekeeper that she ought to ask for the receipt, for you see the old woman mixes up all sorts of queer things that oughtn't to go together at all; in short, the flavor is very extraordinary and not in the least what it ought to be, although each of the ingredients separately is excellent, and made of a pig properly fattened on peas." "Mother, give Bräsig some more beer," said Joseph. "No more, thank you, Mrs. Nüssler. May I ask for a little kümmel instead? Charles, since the time that I was learning farming at old Knirkstädt with you, and that rascal Pomuchelskopp, I've always been accustomed to drink a tiny little glass of kümmel at breakfast and supper, and it agrees with me very well, I am thankful to say. But, Charles, whatever induced you to have any business transactions with such a rascal as Pomuchelskopp? I told you long ago that he was not to be trusted, he's a regular old Venetian, he's a cunning dog, in short, he's a — Jesuit." "Ah, Bräsig," said Hawermann, "we won't talk about it. He might have treated me differently; but still it was my own fault, I oughtn't to have agreed to his terms. I'm thinking of something else now. I wish I could get something to do!" "Of course, you must get a situation as soon as possible. The Count, my master, is looking out for a steward for his principal estate, but don't be angry with me for saying so Charles, I don't think that it would do for you. You see, you'd have to go to the Count every morning with laquered boots, and a cloth coat, and you'd have to speak High-German, for he considers our provincial way of talking very rude and uncultivated. And then you'd have all the women bothering you, for they have a great say in all the arrangements. You might perhaps manage with the boots, and the coat, and the High-German — though you're rather out of practice — but you'd never get on with the women. The Countess is always poking about to see that all's going on rightly in the cattle-sheds and pig-sties,— in short — it's, it's as bad as Sodom and Gomorrah." "Bless me!" cried

Mrs. Nüssler, "I remember now. The farm-bailiff at Pümpelhagen left at the midsummer-term, and that would just be the place for you, Charles." "Mrs. Nüssler is right, as usual," said Bräsig. "As for the *Councillor** at Pümpelhagen"—he always gave the squire of Pümpelhagen his professional title, and laid such an emphasis on the word councillor that one might have thought that he and Mr. von Rambow had served their time in the army together, or at least had eaten their soup out of the same bowl with the same spoon—"as for the *Councillor* at Pümpelhagen, he is very kind to all his people, gives a good salary, and is quite a gentleman of the old school. He knows all about you too. It's just the very thing for you, Charles, and I'll go with you tomorrow. What do you say, young Joseph?" "Ah!" said Mr. Nüssler meditatively, "it all depends upon circumstances." "Good gracious!" exclaimed Mrs. Nüssler with a look of anxiety on her pretty face. "I'm forgetting everything today. If grandfather and grandmother ever find out that we've been having a supper-party here without their knowledge, they'll never forgive me as long as I live. Sit a little closer children. *You* might have reminded me, Joseph." "What shall I do now?" asked Joseph, but she had already left the room.

A few minutes later she came back, accompanied by the two old people. There was an expression of anxious watchfulness and aimless attention in both faces, such as deaf people often have, and which is apt to degenerate into a look of inanity and distrust. It is a very true saying that when a husband and wife have lived many years together, and have shared each other's thoughts and interests, they at last grow to be like one another in appearance, and even when the features are different the expression becomes the same. Old Mr. and Mrs. Nüssler looked thoroughly soured, and as if they had never had the least bit of happiness or enjoyment all their lives long, such things being

* *Translator's note.* The Kammer is the chief government office in Mecklenburg, and Mr. von Rambow was a member of it.

too expensive for them; their clothes were threadbare and dirty, as if they must always be saving, saving, and even found water a luxury that cost too much money. There was nothing comfortable about their old age, not a single gleam of kindliness shone in their lack-lustre eyes, for they had never had but *one* joy, and that was their son Joseph, and his getting on in the world. They were now worn out, and everything was tiresome to them, even their one joy, their son Joseph, was tiresome, but they were still anxious and troubled about his getting on in the world, that was the only thing they cared for now. The old man had become a little childish, but his wife had still all her wits about her, and could spy and pry into every hole and corner, to see that everything was going on as she wished.

Hawermann rose and shook hands with the old people, while his sister stood close by looking at them anxiously, to see what they thought of the visitor. She had already explained to them in a few words, why her brother had come, and that may have been the reason that the old faces looked even sourer than usual, but still it might be because she had provided a better supper than she generally did. They seated themselves at table. The old woman caught sight of Hawermann's little girl: "Is that his child?" she asked. Her daughter-in-law nodded. "Is she going to remain here?" she asked. Her daughter-in-law nodded again. "O—h!" said the old woman, drawing out the word till it was long enough to cover all the harm she thought the cost of the child's keep would bring upon her Joseph. "Yes, these *are* hard times," she continued, as though she thought speaking of the times would best settle the question, "*very* hard times, and every man has enough to do to get on in the world himself." Meanwhile the old man had done nothing but stare at the bottle of beer and at Bräsig's glass: "Is that my beer?" he asked. "Yes," shouted Bräsig in his ear, "and most excellent beer it is that Mrs. Nüssler brews, it's a capital *rajeunissimang* for a weak stomach!" "What extravagance! What extrava-

gance!" grumbled the old man. His wife ate her supper, but never took her eyes off the oak chest opposite.

Young Mrs. Nüssler, who must have studied the peculiarities of her mother-in-law with great care, looked to see what was the matter, and found to her horror and dismay that the cap was gone from its stand. Good gracious! what had become of it? She had plaited it up that very morning, and hung it on the stand. "Where's my cap?" the old woman at last inquired. "Never mind, mother," said her daughter-in-law bending toward her, "I'll get it directly." "Is it done up yet?" The young woman nodded, and thought, surely grandmother will be satisfied now, but the old woman glanced into every corner of the room to see what she could find out. Bräsig's countenance changed when he heard the cap spoken of, and he looked about him hastily to see where the "beastly thing" could have got to, but in another moment old Mrs. Nüssler pointed at little Louisa Hawermann, and said with a venomous smile, like a stale roll dipped in fly-poison: "It must be plaited all over again." "What's the matter?" cried her daughter-in-law, and starting up as she spoke, she saw the ends of the cap ribbons hanging down below the hem of the child's frock; she lifted her niece off the chair, and was going to have picked up the cap, but the old woman was too quick for her. She seized her crumpled head-gear, and when she saw the flattened puffs, and Bräsig's bit of pack-thread hanging half in and half out of the caser, her wrath boiled over, and holding up her cap so that every one might see it, exclaimed: "Good for nothing chit!" and was going to have struck the little girl over the head with her cap.

But Bräsig caught her by the arm and said: "The child had nothing to do with it," and then growled out in a half whisper: "The old cat!" At the same moment loud crying was to be heard behind the grandmother's chair, and Mina sobbed: "I'll never, never do it again," and Lina sobbed: "And I'll never do it again." "Bless me!"

cried young Mrs. Nüssler, "it was the little girls who did all the mischief. Mother, it was our own children that did it." But the old woman had been too long accustomed to turn everything to her own advantage, not to know how to make a judicious use of her deafness; she never heard what she did not want to hear; and she did not want to hear now. "Come," she shouted, and signed to her husband. "Mother, mother," cried her daughter-in-law, "give me your cap, and I'll set it to rights." "Who's at the fold?" asked the old woman as she left the room with old Joseph. Young Joseph lighted his pipe again. "Good gracious!" said Mrs. Nüssler, "she's quite right there, I ought to be at the fold. Ah well, grandmother won't be civil to me again for a month." "Crusty," said Bräsig, "was an old dog, and Crusty had to give in at last." "Don't cry any more, my pets," said the mother, wiping her little girls' eyes. "You didn't know what harm you were doing, you are such stupid little things. Now be good children, and go and play with your cousin, I must go to my work. Joseph, just keep an eye on the children, please," and then Mrs. Nüssler put on her chip-hat, and set off to the fold where the cows were milked.

"A mother-in-law's the very devil!" said Bräsig. "But you, young Joseph," he continued, turning to Mr. Nüssler, who was smoking as calmly as if what had happened was nothing to him, "ought to be ashamed of yourself for allowing your mother to bully your wife." "But," said young Joseph, "how can I interfere? I am her son." "You needn't actually *strike* her," said Bräsig, "because your parents are given you by God, but you might give her a little filial advice now and then, such as befits an obedient son, and so prevent the devil of dispeace getting into the house. And as for you, Charles Hawermann, don't take a little tiff like this to heart, for your sister has a cheerful disposition, and an affectionate nature, so she'll soon be on good terms with the old skin-flints again, and they can't get on without her, she's the mainstay of the household.

But now," and he pulled an enormous watch out of his pocket, the kind of watch that is called a warming-pan, " it's seven o'clock, and I must go and look after my work-people." " Wait," said Hawermann, " I'll go part of the way with you. Good-by for the present, Joseph." " Good-by, brother-in-law," said young Joseph from his corner.

As soon as they were out of doors Hawermann asked: " I say, Bräsig, how could you speak of the old people in such a way before their son?" " He's quite accustomed to it, Charles. No one has a good word for the two old misers, they've quarreled with all the neighbors, and as for the servants, *they* take very good care to keep out of the old wretches' sight." " My poor sister!" sighed Hawermann; " she used to be such a merry light-hearted girl, and now, shut up in a house with such people, and such a Nuss (slow) of a man." " You're right enough there, Charles, he is an old Nuss, and Nüssler (slow-coach) is his name; but *he* never bullies your sister, and although he is such an ass that he can manage nothing himself, he has sense enough to see that your sister is quite able to keep everything straight." " Poor girl! She married that man for my sake, to make my way easier for me, she said; and for our old mother's sake, to give her a comfortable home with one of her children in her latter days." " I know, I know, Charles. I know it from my own experience. Don't you remember it was during the rye-harvest, and you said to me, Zachariah, you said, you must be in love, for you're leading in your rye quite wet. And I said; how so? On the Sunday before that we had had spruce-beer, and your sister was one of the party, or else I shouldn't have led in the rye in such weather. And then I told you that if I didn't change my mind your sister was the only one of my three sweethearts that I'd marry. Then you laughed heartily, and said, she was too young. What has being young to do with it? I asked. And then you said that my other two sweethearts came first, and so they ought to have

the preference. And then you laughed again, and didn't seem to believe that I was in earnest. A short time afterward my lord the Count changed *his* mind, and said he wouldn't have a married bailiff. And then a little more time passed, and it was too late. Young Joseph made her an offer, and your mother begged her so hard to take him, that she consented. Ah well, that marriage ought never to have been," and Bräsig looked down gravely. After a moment's silence he went on—"When I saw the twins I felt drawn to them, and thought that they might have been my own, and I almost wished that the old woman, old Joseph, and young Joseph were in their graves. It was indeed a happy day for the old Jesuits when your sister brought her loving heart and cheerful nature into their house, if it had been any one else there would have been murder done long ago."

While they were talking they had left the village behind them, and were now beside the large garden. Suddenly Hawermann exclaimed: "Look there, the two old people are on the top of the hill yonder." "Yes," said Bräsig with a derisive chuckle, "there they are, the hypocritical old Jesuits, standing in their hiding-place." "Hiding-place?" asked Hawermann, astonished. "Up there on the hill?" "Even so, Charles, the old creatures can trust no one, not even their own children, and when they want to say anything to each other that they can't explain by their usual signs, they always go to the very top of the hill where they can see that there are no eavesdroppers, and shout their secrets in one another's ears. Look at them cackling away, the old woman has laid another dragon's egg, and now they're both going to hatch it." "How eagerly they're talking," said Hawermann. "Do you see how the old woman is gesticulating? What can it all be about?" "I know what they are laying down the law about, for I know them well. And Charles," he continued after a short silence, "it is better that you should understand the whole state of the case at once, and then you'll know how to act.

They're talking about you, and your little girl." "About me, and my little girl!" repeated Hawermann in astonishment. "Yes, Charles — don't you see. If you had come with a great purse full of money, they would have received you with open arms, for money is the only thing for which they have the slightest respect; but as it is they regard you and the child in the light of beggarly poor relations who will take the very bread out of the mouth of their unfortunate son." "Oh!" sighed Hawermann, "why didn't I leave the child with the Rassows? Who is to take care of her? Can you advise me what to do? I can't leave her here in my sister's charge for my sister's sake." "Of course you'd like to have her near you. Well, Charles, I'll tell you something. You must remain at the Nüsslers tonight. Tomorrow we'll go and see the *Councillor* at Pümpelhagen: if we succeed there we'll look out for a good place for the child in the neighborhood; and if we don't succeed, we'll go to the town and board her for the present with Kurz, the shopkeeper. And now good-night, Charles! Don't be down-hearted, everything will look brighter soon." And so he went away.

Bräsig arrived in good time next morning to go to Pümpelhagen with Hawermann. Mrs. Nüssler was sitting in the porch paying the farm-servants, and Joseph was sitting beside her smoking while she worked. Neither of the old people had come down yet, for the grandmother had said to her daughter-in-law, she, at least, could not join them in the parlor, for she had nothing to put on her head; and the grandfather had said, they could all be quite happy without him. "That's really kind of them," said Bräsig. "There's no fear of our dinner being spoilt now by their bad temper, for, Mrs. Nüssler, I'm going to spend the day with Charles. Come, Charles, we must be off. Good-by little round-heads."

When they were out in the yard Bräsig stood still, and said: "Look, Charles, did you ever see anything more like the desert of Sahara? One heap of manure here and another

there! And look, that's the drain old Joseph cut from the farm-yard to the village horse-pond. And as for the roofs," he continued, "they have enough straw to make new ones, but the old people think money expended on thatching sheer waste. I come here often, and for two reasons; firstly because of my stomach, and secondly because of my heart. I've always found that well-cooked food is not only pleasant to the taste, but also produces a wholesome exhilaration when followed by one of the little rages I generally get into here. And I come here for the sake of your sister and the little round-heads. I know that I am of use to her, for young Joseph just rolls on smoothly like the wheel of the coach that runs every winter from here to Rostock. How I should like to have him as leader in a three-horse team, harnessed into a farm cart, and then drive him with my whip!" "Ah!" said Hawermann as they came to a field, "they've got very good wheat here." "Yes, it's pretty fair, but what do you think they were going to have had there instead? Rye! And for what reason? Simply because old Joseph had sown rye in that field every year for twenty-one years!" "Does their farm extend to the other side of the hill?" "No, Charles, it isn't quite such a fat morsel as all that, like bacon fried in butter and eaten with a spoon! No, no, the wheat on the top of the hill is mine." "Ah, well, it's odd how soon one forgets. Then your land comes down as far as this?" "Yes, Charles; Warnitz is a long narrow estate, it extends from here on the one side as far as Haunerwiem on the other. Now stand still for a moment, I can show you the whole lie of the country from this point. Where we are standing belongs to your brother-in-law, his land reaches from my wheat-field up there to the right, as far as that small clump of fir-trees to the left. You see, Rexow is quite a small farm, there are only a few more acres belonging to it on the other side of the village. To the right up there is Warnitz; and in front of us, where the fallow ground begins, is Pümpelhagen; and down there to the left, behind the little clump of firs, is Gürlitz."

"Then Warnitz is the largest?" "No, Charles, you've mistaken me there. Pümpelhagen is the best estate in the neighborhood, the wheat-land there produces forty-two loads, and that is eight more than Warnitz can show. It would be a blessing if all the other places were like it. The *Councillor* is a good man, and understands farming, but you see his profession obliges him to live in Schwerin, so he can't attend to Pümpelhagen. He has had a good many bailiffs of one kind or another. He came into the estate when everything was very dear, and there are a considerable number of apothecaries* on it, so that he must often feel in want of mŏney, and all the more so that his wife is extravagant, and likes to live in a constant whirl of gaiety. He is a worthy man and kind to his people, and although the von Rambows are of very old family — my master, the Count, often asks him to dinner, and *he* will not admit any but members of the nobility to the honor of his acquaintance — he goes about quite *doucimang*, and makes no fuss about his position."

Hawermann listened attentively to all that was said, for if he succeeded in getting the place of bailiff, these things would all be of importance to him, but his thoughts soon returned to the subject of his greatest present anxiety. "Bräsig," he said, "who is the best person to take charge of my little girl?" "I can't think of any one. I'm afraid that we must take her to the town to Kurz. Mrs. Kurz is an excellent woman, and he, well he is a good hand at a bargain like all tradesmen. Only think, he sold me a pair of trousers last year. I wanted them for Sundays — they were a sort of chocolate color: well listen: the first morning I put them on, I went through the clover-field, and when I came out of it, my trousers were as red as lobsters, as high as the knee — bright scarlet I assure you. And then he sent me some kümmel, it was Prussian made, wretched sweet stuff, and very bad. I returned it, and told him a bit

* A mortgage or lien, a corruption of *Hypothek*.

of my mind. But he won't take the trousers back, and tells me he never wore them. Does the fellow imagine that *I* will wear red trousers? Look, Charles, that's Gürlitz down there to the left." "And that, I suppose, is Gürlitz church-steeple?" asked Hawermann. "Yes!" said Bräsig, raising his eye-brows till they were hidden by the brim of his hat—he always wore a hat on Sunday—and opening his mouth as wide as he could, he stared at Hawermann as if he wanted to look him through and through. "Charles," he exclaimed, "you spoke of Gürlitz church-steeple, and as sure as your nose is in the middle of your face the parson at Gürlitz must take your child." "Parson Behrens?" asked Hawermann. "Yes, the same Parson Behrens who taught you and me at old Knirkstädt." "Ah, Bräsig, I was just wishing last night that such a thing were possible." "Possible? He must do it. It would be the best thing in the world for him to have a little child toddling about his knees, and growing up under his care, for he has no children of his own, has let all the glebe land, and has nothing whatever to do but to read his books and study, till any other man would see green and yellow specks dancing before his eyes even with looking at him from a distance. It would be a capital thing for him, and Mrs. Behrens is so fond of children that the little ones in the village cling to her skirts whenever she goes there. She is also a most excellent worthy woman, and so cheerful that she and your sister get on capitally together."

"If it could only be," cried Hawermann. "What do we not both owe that man, Zachariah, don't you remember that when he was assistant to the clergyman at Knirkstädt, he held an evening class during the winter, and taught reading and writing, and how kind he always was to us stupid boys?" "Yes, Charles, and how Samuel Pomuchelskopp used to get behind the stove and snore till he nearly took the roof off, while we were learning the three R's. Don't you remember when we got to the rule of three in our sums, and tried to get the fourth unknown quantity?

Ah yes, in quickness I had the best of it, but in correctness, you had. You got on better than I did in o'thography, but in *style*, in writing letters, and in High German, I was before you. And in these points I'm much improved since then, for I've made them my study, and of course every one has his own *speshialitee*. Whenever I see the parson I feel bound to thank him for having educated me so well, but he always laughs and says he owes me far more for leting his glebe at such a good rent for him. He is on very friendly terms with me, and if you settle down here, I'll take you to call and then you'll see it for yourself."

Meanwhile they had reached Pümpelhagen, and Bräsig took Hawermann quite under his protection as they crossed the court-yard, and addressing the old butler, asked if his master was at home and able to see them. He would announce the gentlemen, was the servant's reply, and say that Mr. Farm-bailiff Bräsig was there. "Yes," said Bräsig. "You see, Charles, that he knows me, and the *Councillor* knows me also — and — did you notice? — announce! That's what the nobility always have done when any one calls on them. My lord the Count has three servants to announce his visitors; that is to say, one servant announces to another who it is that has called, and the valet tells his lordship. Sometimes queer mistakes are made, as with the huntsman the other day. The first footman announced to the second: 'The chief huntsman,' and the second added the word 'master,' and the third announced the arrival of a 'grandmaster of the huntsmen.' So the Count came forward very cordially to receive the strange gentleman who had come to see him, and — he found no one but old Tibäul the rat-catcher."

The butler now returned and showed the two friends into a good-sized room, tastefully, but not luxuriously furnished, and in the centre of the room was a large table covered with papers and accounts. A tall thin man was standing beside the table when they entered; he was a thoughtful-looking, gentle-mannered man, and the same

simplicity was observable in his dress as in the furniture of his room. He appeared to be about fifty-two or three, and his hair was of an iron gray color; he was perhaps shortsighted, for, as he went forward to receive his visitors, he picked up an eye-glass that was lying on the table, but without using it: "Ah, Mr. Bräsig," he said quietly, "what can I do for you?" Uncle Bräsig now involved himself in such a labyrinth of words in his desire to speak grandly as befitted his company, that he would never have extricated himself if the squire had not come to the rescue. Looking more attentively at Hawermann he said: "You want * * *? but," he interrupted himself, "I ought to know you. Wait a moment. Were you not serving your apprenticeship twelve years ago on my brother's estate?" "Yes, Sir, and my name is Hawermann." "Of course it is. And to what do I owe the pleasure of seeing you here?" "I heard that you were looking out for a farm-bailiff, and as I was in want of just such a place * * *." "But I thought you had a farm in Pomerania?" interrupted the squire. Now was the time for Bräsig to speak if he was going to say anything of importance, so he exclaimed: "It's quite true, Mr. Councillor von Rambow, that he had one, *had* it, but has it no longer, and it's no use crying over spilt milk. Like many other farmers he met with reverses, and the hardness and wickedness of his landlord ruined him. What do you think of that, Sir?"

At this moment there was a loud shout of laughter behind Bräsig's back, and when he turned round to see who it was he found himself face to face with a boy of ten or twelve years old. Mr. von Rambow also smiled, but fortunately it never occurred to Bräsig that their amusement could mean anything but satisfaction with a well delivered speech, so he went on seriously: "And then he came a regular cropper." "I'm very sorry to hear it," said Mr. von Rambow. "Yes," he continued with a sigh, "these are very hard times for farmers, I only hope they'll change soon. But now to business — Alick, just run upstairs and see if

breakfast is ready. It is quite true that I am looking out for a new bailiff, as I have been obliged to part with the last man, because of — well, his carelessness in keeping accounts — but," said he, as his son opened the door and announced that breakfast was ready, "you hav'n't had breakfast yet, we can finish our talk while we eat it." He went to the door, and standing there signed to his guests to precede him. "Charles," whispered Bräsig, "didn't I tell you? Quite like one of ourselves?" But when Hawermann quietly obeyed the squire's sign and went out first, he raised his eyebrows up to his hair, and stretched out his hand as though to pull his friend back by his coat-tails. Then sticking out one of his short legs and making a low bow, he said, "Pardon me — I couldn't think of it — the *Councillor* always has the *paw*." His way of bowing was no mere form, for as he had a long body and short legs it was both deep and reverential.

Mr. von Rambow went on first to escape his guest's civilities, and Bräsig brought up the rear. The whole business was talked over in all its bearings during breakfast; Hawermann got the place of bailiff with a good salary to be raised in five or six years, and only one condition was made, and that was that he should enter on his duties at once. The new bailiff promised to do so, and the following day was fixed for taking stock of everything in and about the farm, so that both he and his employer might know how matters stood before the squire had to leave Pümpelhagen. Then Bräsig told the "sad life-story" of the old thoroughbred, which had come down to being odd horse about the farm, and which he "had had the honor of knowing from its birth," and told how it "had spavin, grease and a variety of other ailments, and so had been reduced to dragging a cart for its sins." After that he and Hawermann took leave of Mr. von Rambow.

"Bräsig," said Hawermann, "a great load has been taken off my heart. Thank God, I shall soon be at work again, and that will help me to bear my sorrow. Now for

Gürlitz — Ah, if we are only as fortunate there." "Yes, Charles, you may well say you are fortunate, for you are certainly wanting in the knowledge of life and fine tact that are necessary for any one to possess who has to deal with the nobility. How *could* you, how *could* you go out of the room before the *Councillor*?" "I only did as he desired me, Bräsig, and I was his guest, not his servant then. I wouldn't do so *now*, and believe me, he'll never ask me to do it again." "Well, Charles, let me manage the whole business for you at the parsonage. I'll do it with the greatest *finesse*." "Certainly Bräsig, it will be very kind of you to do it for me; if it were not for my dear little girl, I should never have the courage to ask such a favor. If you will take the task off my shoulders, I shall look upon it as the act of a true friend."

When they passed Gürlitz church they heard from the singing that service was still going on, so they determined to wait in the parsonage till it was over, but on entering the sitting-room, a round active little woman about forty years old came forward to receive them. Everything about her was round, arms and fingers, head, cheeks and lips; and her round eyes twinkled so merrily in her round smiling face that one would at once jump to the conclusion that she had never known sorrow, and her every action was so cheery and full of life that one could easily see that she had a warm heart in her breast. "How d'ye do, Mr. Bräsig, sit down, sit down. My pastor is still in church, but he would scold me if I allowed you to go away. Sit down, Sir — who are you? I should have liked to have gone to church today, but only think, the clergyman's seat broke down last Sunday; lots of people go to it, you see, and one can't say 'no,' and old Prüsshawer, the carpenter, who was to have mended it this week, is down with a fever." Her words poured out smoothly like polished billiard-balls rolled by a happy child over the green cloth.

Bräsig now introduced Hawermann as Mrs. Nüssler's brother. "And so you are her brother Charles. *Do* sit

down, my pastor will be delighted to see you. Whenever Mrs. Nüssler comes here she tells us something about you, and always in your praise — Mr. Bräsig can vouch for that. Good gracious, Bräsig, what have *you* got to do with my hymn-book? Just put it down, will you. *You* never read such things, you are nothing but an old heathen. These are hymns for the dying, and what are hymns for the dying to you? *You* are going to live for ever. You're not a whit better than the wandering Jew! One has to think of death sometimes, and as our seat is broken, and the old carpenter has a fever, I have been reading some meditations for the dying." While saying this she quickly picked up her books and put them away, carefully going through the unnecessary ceremony of dusting a spotless shelf before laying them down on it. Suddenly she went to the door leading to the kitchen, and stood there listening; then exclaiming: "I was sure I heard it — the soup's boiling over," hastened from the room. "Well, Charles — wasn't I right? Isn't she a cheery, wholesome-natured woman? I'll go and arrange it all for you," and he followed Mrs. Behrens to the kitchen.

Hawermann looked round the room, and admired the cleanly, comfortable, home-like, and peaceful look of everything around him. Over the sofa was a picture of our Saviour, and encircling it, above and below, were portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Behrens' relations, some colored, some black, some large, and some small. In the picture of our Lord, His hands were raised in blessing, so Mrs. Behrens had hung the portraits of her relatives beneath it that they might have the best of the blessing, for she always regarded herself as the "nearest." She had hung her own portrait, taken when she was a girl, and that of her husband in the least prominent place over against the window, but God's sun, which shone through the white window-curtains, and gilded the other pictures, lighted up these two first of all. There was a small book-case containing volumes of sacred and profane literature all mixed up together, but they

looked very well indeed, for they were arranged more in accordance with the similarity of their bindings than with that of their contents. Let no one imagine that Mrs. Behrens did not care for reading really good standard works, because she spoke the Provincial German of her neighborhood. Whoever took the trouble to open one of the books, which had a mark in it, would see that she was quite able to appreciate good writing, and her cookery-book showed that she studied her own subjects as thoroughly as her husband did his, for the book was quite full of the notes and emendations she had written at the sides of the pages in the same way as Mr. Behrens made notes in his books. As for her husband's favorite dishes she "knew them," she said, "by heart, and had not to put in a mark to show where they were to be found."

And it was in this quiet home that Hawermann's little daughter was to spend her childhood, if God let him have his wish. The raised hands in the Saviour's picture would seem to bless his little girl, and the sunlight would shine upon her through these windows, and in those books she would read what great and good men had written, and by their help would gradually waken from childish dreams into the life and thoughts of womanhood.

As he was sitting there full of alternating hopes and fears, Mrs. Behrens came back, her eyes red with weeping: "Don't say another word, Mr. Hawermann, don't say another word. Bräsig has told me all, and though Bräsig is a heathen, he is a good man, and a true friend to you and yours. And my pastor thinks the same as I do, I know that, for we have always been of one mind about everything. My goodness, what hard-hearted creatures the old Nüsslers are," she added, tapping her foot impatiently on the floor. "The old woman," said Bräsig, "is a perfect harpy." "You're right, Bräsig, that's just what she is. My pastor must try to touch the conscience of the two old people; I don't mean about the little girl, she will come here and live with us, or I know nothing of my pastor."

Whilst Hawermann was expressing his deep gratitude to Mrs. Behrens her husband came in sight. She always talked of him as "*her*" pastor, because he belonged to her soul and body, and "*pastor*" because of his personal and official dignity. He had nothing on his head, for those high soft caps that our good protestant clergy now wear in common with the Russian popes were not the fashion at that time, in the country at least, and instead of wide bands, resembling the white porcelain plate on which the daughter of Herodias received the head of John the Baptist from her stepfather, he wore little narrow bands, which his dear wife Regina had sewed, starched and ironed for him in all Christian humility, and these little bits of lawn she rightly held to be the true insignia of his office, and not the gown, which was fastened to his collar with a small square piece of board. "For, my dear Mrs. Nüssler," she said, "the clerk has a gown exactly the same as that, but he dar'n't wear bands, and when I see my pastor in the pulpit with these signs of his office on, and watch them rising and falling as he speaks, I sometimes think that they look like angels' wings upon which one might go straight away up to heaven, except that the angels wear their wings behind, and my pastor's are in front."

The parson was not an angel by any means, and was the last man in the world to think himself one, but still his conduct was so upright, and his face so expressive of love and good-will, that any one could see in a moment that he was a good man, and that his was a serious, thoughtful mode of life, and yet—when his wife had taken off his gown and bands—there was a bright sparkle in his eye that showed he did not at all disdain innocent mirth. He was a man who could give good counsel in worldly matters as well as in spiritual, and he was always ready to stretch out a helping hand to those in need of it.

He recognized Hawermann the moment he saw him, and welcomed him heartily. "How d'ye do, dear old friend, what an age it is since I saw you last. How are you getting

on? Good morning, Mr. Bräsig." Just as Bräsig was about to explain the reason of his and Hawermann's visit, Mrs. Behrens, who had begun to take off her husband's clerical garments, called out: "Don't speak, Mr. Hawermann; Bräsig be quiet, leave it all to me. I'll tell you all about it," she continued, turning to her husband, "for the story is a sad one — yes, Mr. Hawermann, terribly sad — and so it will be better for me to speak. Come," and she carried her pastor off to his study, saying in apology for doing so as she left the room: "I am the nearest to him, you know."

When Mr. Behrens returned to the parlor with his wife, he went straight up to Hawermann, and taking his hand, said: "Yes, dear Hawermann, yes, we'll do it. We'll do all that lies in our power with very great pleasure. We have had no experience in the management of children, but we will learn — won't we, Regina?" He spoke lightly, for he saw how deeply Hawermann felt his kindness, and therefore wished to set him at ease. "Reverend Sir," he exclaimed at last, "you did much for me in the old days, but this * * *." Little Mrs. Behrens seized her duster, her unfailing recourse in great joy or sorrow, and rubbed now this, and now that article of furniture vigorously, indeed there is no saying whether she might not have dried Hawermann's tears with it, had he not turned away. She then went to the door and called to Frederika: "Here, Rika, just run down to the weaver's wife, and ask her to send me her cradle, for," she added, addressing Bräsig, "she doesn't require it." And Bräsig answered gravely: "But Mrs. Behrens, the child isn't quite a baby." So the clergyman's wife went to the door again, and called to the servant: "Rika, Rika, not the cradle. Ask her to lend me a crib instead, and then go to the parish-clerk's daughter, and see if she can come this afternoon. Good gracious! I forgot it was Sunday! But if thine ass falls into a pit, and so on — yes, ask her if she will come and help me to stuff a couple of little mattresses. It isn't a bit heathenish

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BIBLE LESSON

BENJAMIN VAUTIER

of me to do this, Bräsig, for it's a work of necessity, as much so as when you have to save the Count's wheat on a Sunday afternoon. And, my dear Mr. Hawermann, the little girl must come to us this very day, for Frank," turning to her husband, "the old Nüsslers will grudge the child her food, and Bräsig, bread that is grudged * * *" she stopped for breath, and Bräsig put in: "Yes, Mrs. Behrens, bread that is grudged maketh fat, but the devil take that kind of fatness!" "You old heathen! How *dare* you swear so in a Christian parsonage," cried Mrs. Behrens. "But the short and the long of it is that the child must come here today." "Yes, Mrs. Behrens," said Hawermann, "I'll bring her to you this afternoon. My poor sister will be sorry; but it's better for her and her household peace that it should be so, and for my little girl * * *." He then thanked the clergyman and his wife gratefully and heartily, and when he had said good-by, and he and Bräsig were out of doors, he drew a long breath of relief, and said: "Everything looked dark to me this morning, but now the sun has begun to shine again, and though I have a disagreeable bit of business before me, it is a happy day." "What is it that you have to do?" asked Bräsig. "I must go to Rahnstädt to see old Moses. He has held a bill of mine for seventy-five pounds for the last eighteen months. He took no part in my bankruptcy, and I want to arrange matters with him." "Yes, Charles, you ought to make everything straight with him as soon as you can, for old Moses is by no means the worst of his kind. Now then, let's lay out our plan of operations for today. We must return to Rexow at once, dine there, and after dinner young Joseph must get the carriage ready for you to take your little girl to Gürlitz; from Gürlitz you should drive on to Rahnstädt, and then in the evening come over to Warnitz and spend the night with me, and early next morning you can be at Pümpelhagen with the Councillor, who expects to see you in good time." "That will do very well," said Hawermann.

[Wheat was again growing in the field by the mill, as when Hawermann came to Pümpelhagen eleven years before. The same people still lived in the various villages and estates, only the manor house of Gürlitz had changed hands, for Pomuchelskopp, the man who had brought about Hawermann's failure in Pomerania, lived there now. His was the only house which uncle Bräsig shunned, everywhere else he was the welcome guest bringing sunshine whenever he arrived. His breezy common sense often recalled his friends from useless trains of thought. "Bräsig," said Hawermann, "I don't know what other people may think of it, but life and work always seem to me to be one and the same thing." "Oh, ho! Charles, I have you now! You learnt that from pastor Behrens. But, Charles, that is a wrong way of looking at it, it goes clean against Scripture. The Bible tells us of the lilies of the field, how they toil not, neither do they spin, and yet our Heavenly Father feeds them. And if God feeds them, they are alive, and yet they do not work. And when I have that confounded gout, and can do nothing — absolutely nothing, except flap the beastly flies away from my face — can I be said to work? And yet I am alive, and suffer horrible torture into the bargain." Gradually this torture grew so unbearable that uncle Bräsig had to submit to treatment at a watering place.]

Spring was gone, and summer had come, when one Sunday morning Hawermann received a letter from Bräsig dated from Warnitz, in which his friend requested him to remain at home that day, for he had returned and intended to call on him that afternoon. When Bräsig arrived, he sprang from his saddle with so much force that one might have thought he wanted to go through the road with both legs. "Oho!" cried Hawermann, "how brisk you are! You're all right now, ar'n't you?" "As right as a trivet, Charles. I've renewed my youth." "Well, how have you been getting on, old boy?" asked Hawermann, when they

were seated on the sofa and their pipes were lighted. "Listen, Charles. Cold, damp, watery, clammy — that's about what it comes to. It's just turning a human being into a frog, and before a man's nature is so changed, he has such a hard time of it that he begins to wish that he had come into the world a frog: still, it isn't a bad thing! You begin the day with the common packing, as they call it. They wrap you up in cold, damp sheets, and then in woollen blankets, in which they fasten you up so tight that you can't move any part of your body except your toes. In this condition they take you to a bath-room, and a man goes before you ringing a bell to warn the ladies to keep out of your way. Then they place you, just as God made you, in a bath, and dash three pails of water over your bald head, if you happen to have one, and after that they allow you to go away. Well, do you think that that's the end of it? Nay, Charles, there's more to follow; but it's a good thing all the same. Now you've got to go for a walk in a place where you've nothing earthly to do. I've been accustomed all my life to walk a great deal, but then it was doing something, ploughing or harrowing, spreading manure or cutting corn, and there I'd no occupation whatever. While walking you are expected to drink ever so many tumblers of water, ever so many. Some of the people were exactly like sieves, they were always at it, and they used to gasp out 'What splendid water it is!' Don't believe them, Charles, it is nothing but talk. Water applied externally is bad enough in all conscience, but internally it's still more horrible. Then comes the sitz-bath. Do you know what a bath at four degrees below zero is like? It's very much what you would feel if you were in hell, and the devil had tied you down to a glowing iron chair, under which he kept up a roaring fire; still it's a good thing! Then you've to walk again till dinner-time. And now comes dinner. Ah, Charles, you have no idea what a human being goes through at a water-cure place! You've got to drink no end of water. Charles, I've seen ladies, small and thin as real

angels, drink each of them three caraffes as large as laundry-pails at a sitting — and then the pōtatoes! Good gracious, as many potatoes were eaten in a day as would have served to plant an acre of ground! These water-doctors are much to be pitied, their patients must eat them out of house and home. In the afternoon the water-drinking goes on as merrily as before, and you may now talk to the ladies if you like; but in the morning you may not approach them, for they are not then dressed for society. Before dinner some of them are to be seen running about with wet stockings, as if they had been walking through a field of clover, others have wet bandages tied round their heads, and all of them let their hair hang down over their shoulders, and wear a Venus' girdle round their waists, which last, however, is not visible. But in the afternoon, as I said, you may talk to them as much as you like, but will most likely get short answers unless you speak to them about their health, and ask them how often they have been packed, and what effect it had on them, for that is the sort of conversation that is most approved of at a water-cure establishment. After amusing yourself in this way for a little you must have a touche (douche), that is a great rush of ice-cold water — and that's a good thing too. Above all, Charles, you must know that what every one most dislikes, and whatever is most intensely disagreeable is found to be wholesome and good for the constitution." "Then you ought to be quite cured of your gout," said Hawermann, "for of all things in the world cold water was what you always disliked the most." "It's easy to see from that speech that you've never been at the water-cure, Charles. Listen — this is how the doctor explained the whole thing to me. That confounded gout is the chief of all diseases — in other words, it is the source of them all, and it proceeds from the gouty humor which is in the bones, and which simply tears one to pieces with the pain, and this gouty substance comes from the poisonous matter one has swallowed as food — for example, kümmel or tobacco — or as medicine at the apothe-

cary's. Now you must understand that any one who has gout must, if he wishes to be cured, be packed in damp sheets, till the water has drawn all the tobacco he has ever smoked, and all the kümmel he has ever drunk out of his constitution. First the poisonous matter goes, then the gouty matter, and last of all the gout itself." "And has it been so with you?" "No." "Why didn't you remain longer then? I should have stayed on, and have got rid of it once for all if I had been you." "You don't know what you are talking about, Charles. No one could stand it, and no one has ever done it all at once. * * * But now let me go on with my description of our daily life. After the touche you are expected to walk again, and by the time that is finished it has begun to grow dusk. You may remain out later if you like, and many people do so, both gentlemen and ladies, or you may go into the house and amuse yourself by reading. I always spent the evening in studying the water-books written by an author named Franck, who is, I understand, at the head of his profession. These books explain the plan on which the water-doctors proceed, and give reasons for all they do; but it's very difficult to understand. I could never get further than the two first pages, and these were quite enough for me, for when I'd read them I felt as light-headed and giddy as if I had been standing on my head for half an hour. You imagine, no doubt, Charles, that the water in your well is water? He does not think so! Listen, fresh air is divided into three parts: oxygen, nitrogen, and black carbon; and water is divided into two parts: carbon and hydrogen. Now the whole water-cure the'ry is founded on water and air. And listen, Charles, just think of the wisdom of nature: when a human being goes out into the fresh air he inhales both black carbon and nitrogen through his windpipe, and as his constitution can't stand the combination of these two dreadful things, the art of curing by water steps in, and drives them out of his throat. And the way that it does so is this: the oxygen grapples with the carbon, and the hydrogen

drives the nitrogen out of your body. Do you understand me, Charles?" "No," said Hawermann, laughing heartily, "you can hardly expect me to do that." "Never laugh at things you don't understand, Charles. Listen — I have smelt the nitrogen myself, but as for the black carbon, what becomes of it? That is a difficult question, and I didn't get on far enough with the water-science to be able to answer it. Perhaps you think that parson Behrens could explain the matter to me, but no, when I asked him yesterday he said that he knew nothing about it. And now, Charles, you'll see that I've still got the black carbon in me, and that I shall have that beastly gout again." "But, Zachariah, why didn't you remain a little longer and get thoroughly cured?" "Because," and Bräsig cast down his eyes, and looked uncomfortable, "I couldn't. Something happened to me. Charles," he continued, raising his eyes to his friend's face, "you've known me from my childhood, tell me, did you ever see me disrespectful to a woman?" "No, Bräsig, I can bear witness that I never did." "Well, then, just think what happened. A week ago last Friday the gout was very troublesome in my great toe — you know it always begins by attacking the small end of the human wedge — and the water-doctor said: 'Mr. Bailiff,' he said, 'you must have an extra packing, Dr. Strump's colchicum is the cause of this, and we must get rid of it.' Well, it was done; he packed me himself, and so tight that I had hardly room to breathe, telling me for my comfort that water was more necessary for me than air, and then he wanted to shut the window. 'No,' I said, 'I understand the the'ry well enough to know that I must have fresh air, so please leave the window open.' He did as I asked, and went away.* I lay quite still in my compress

* *Translator's note.*— This story is founded on fact, and during Reuter's last visit to Stuer (from the 13th of December, 1868, till the 29th of January, 1869) he discovered to his great amusement that he had been given the very room in which the director of the establishment told him the hero of the tale had been attacked by a neighbor's bees while he was lying helpless in the "packing" sheets. See Duboc's "Auf Reuterschem Boden" in Westermann's "*Monats-Hefte.*"

thinking no evil, when suddenly I heard a great humming and buzzing in my ears, and when I could look up, I saw a swarm of bees streaming in at my window, preceded by their queen. I knew her well, Charles, for as you know I am a bee-keeper. One spring the school-master at Zittelwitz and I got fifty-seven in a field. I now saw that the queen was going to settle on the blanket which the doctor had drawn over my head. What was to be done? I couldn't move. I blew at her, and blew and blew till my breath was all gone. It was horrible! The queen settled right on the bald part of my head — for I had taken off my wig as usual to save it — and now the whole swarm flew at my face. That was enough for me. Quickly I rolled out of bed, freed myself from the blanket, wriggled out of the wet sheets, and reached the door, for the devil was at my heels. I got out at the door, and striking out at my assailants blindly and madly, shrieked for help. God be praised and thanked for the existence of the water-doctor — his name is Ehrfurcht — he came to my rescue, and, taking me to another room, fetched me my clothes, and so after a few hours' rest I was able to go down to the dining-room — *salong* as they call it — but I still had half a bushel of bee-stings in my body. I began to speak to the gentlemen, and they did nothing but laugh. Why did they laugh, Charles? You don't know, nor do I. I turned to one of the ladies, and spoke to her in a friendly way about the weather; she blushed. What was there in the weather to make her red? I can't tell, nor can you, Charles. I spoke to the lady who sings, and asked her very politely to let us hear the beautiful song which she sings every evening. What did she do, Charles? She turned her back upon me! I now busied myself with my own thoughts, but the water-doctor came up to me, and said courteously: 'Don't be angry with me, Mr. Bailiff, but you've made yourself very remarkable this afternoon.' 'How?' I asked. 'Miss von Hinkefuss was crossing the passage when you ran out of your room, and she has told every one else in strict confidence.' 'And so,'

I said, ' you give me no sympathy, the gentlemen laugh at me, and the ladies turn their pretty backs upon me. No, I didn't come here for that! If Miss von Hinkefuss had met *me*, if half a bushel of bee-stings had been planted in *her* body, I should have asked her every morning with the utmost propriety how she was. But let her alone! There is no market where people can buy kind-heartedness! Come away, doctor, and pull the stings out of my body.' He said he couldn't do it. ' What!' I asked, ' can't you pull bee-stings out of a man's skin?' ' No,' he said, ' that is to say, I *can* do it, but I dare not, for that is an operation such as surgeons perform, and I have no diploma for surgery from the Mecklenburg government.' ' What?' I asked, ' you are allowed to draw gout out of my bones, but it is illegal for you to draw a bee-sting out of my skin? You dare not meddle with the outer skin which you can see, and yet you presume to attack my internal maladies which you can't see? *Thank* you!' Well, Charles, from that moment I lost all faith in the water-doctor, and without faith they can do nothing as they themselves tell you when it comes to the point. So I went away quietly and got old Metz, the surgeon at Rahnstädt, to draw out the stings. That was the end of the water-cure; still it's a good thing; one gets new ideas in a place like that, and even if one's gout is not cured, one gains some notion of what a human being can suffer. And now, Charles, this is a water-book I have brought you, you can study it in the winter-evenings."

[Three more years had passed, and Louisa Hawermann at the parsonage was repaying her father's and her foster parents' love and care by growing up the loveliest girl of the neighborhood. Uncle Bräsig, to be sure, would have qualified this by saying " next to his two round-heads." No qualification, however, was justified in the eyes of Frank von Rambow and Fred Triddelfitz, the two young men studying agriculture under Hawermann. They fell in love with her, each after his own fashion. Frank deeply and

lastingly, Fred — whom uncle Bräsig loved to call the "gray hound" — ardently if not irretrievably. This, however, he did not know, and as he felt his blood seething, he was thoroughly wretched.]

No human being can stand more than a certain amount of pain, after that it becomes unbearable and a remedy must be found; now the only remedy a lover finds effectual is an interview with his sweetheart. Matters had come to such a pass with Fred that he could no longer exist without seeing Louisa, so he began to lie in wait for her in all sorts of holes and corners. Every hollow-tree was a good hiding-place from which he could watch for her coming, every ditch was of use in concealing his advance, every hill was a look-out from which he could sweep the country with his gaze, and every thicket served him for an ambush. He was so much in earnest that he could not fail to succeed in his attempts to see her, and he often gave Louisa a great fright by pouncing out upon her, when she least expected him, and when she was perhaps thinking of * * * we will not say Frank. Sometimes he was to be seen rearing his long slight figure out of a bush like a snake in the act of springing, sometimes his head would appear above the green ears of rye like a seal putting its head above water, and sometimes as she passed under a tree he would drop down at her side from the branches where he had been crouched like a lynx waiting for its prey. At first she did not mind it much, for she looked upon it as a new form of his silly practical joking, and so she only laughed and talked to him about some indifferent subject; but she soon discovered that a very remarkable change had taken place in him. He spoke gravely and solemnly and uttered the merest nothings as if they had been the weightiest affairs of state. He passed his hand meditatively across his forehead as if immersed in profound thought, and when she spoke of the weather, he laid his hand upon his heart as if he were suffering from a sudden pain in the side. When she asked him to come

to Gürlitz he shook his head sadly, and said: Honor forbade him to do so. When she asked him about her father, his words poured forth like a swiftly flowing stream: The bailiff was an angel; there never was, and never would be such a man again on the face of the earth; *his* father was good and kind, but *hers* was the prince of fathers. When she asked after Miss Fidelia, he said: He never troubled himself about women, and was utterly indifferent to *almost* all of them; but once when, as ill luck would have it, she asked him about Frank, his eyes flashed and he shouted: "Ha!" once or twice with a sort of snort, laughed scornfully, caught hold of her hand, slipped a bit of paper into it, and plunged head foremost into the rye-field, where he was soon lost to sight. When she opened the paper she found that it contained the following effusion:

TO HER.

"When with tender silvery light
Luna peeps the clouds between,
And 'spite of dark disastrous night
The radiant sun is also seen
When the wavelets murmuring flow
When oak and ivy clinging grow,
Then, O then, in that witching hour
Let us meet *in my* lady's bow'r.

"Where'er thy joyous step doth go
Love waits upon thee ever,
The spring-flow'rs in my hat do show
I'll cease to love thee never.
When thou'rt gone from out my sight
Vanished is my sole delight,
Alas! Thou ne'er canst understand
What I've suffered at thy hand.

"My *vengeance* dire! will fall on him,
The foe who has hurt me sore,
Hurt *me!* who writes this poem here;
Revenge!! I'll seek for evermore.

FREDERIC TRIDDELFITZ.

Pümpelhagen, July 3d, 1842."

The first time that Louisa read this effusion she could make nothing of it, when she had read it twice she did not understand it a bit better, and after the third reading she was as far from comprehending it as she had been at first; that is to say, she could not make out who it was on whom the unhappy poet wished to be revenged. She was not so stupid as not to know that the "Her" was intended for herself.

She would have liked to have been able to think that the whole affair was only a silly joke, but when she remembered Fred's odd manner she was obliged to confess that it was anything but a joke, and so she determined to keep as much as possible out of his way. She was such a tender-hearted little creature that she was full of compassion for Fred's sufferings. Now pity is a bridge that often leads to the beautiful meadows stretched on the other side of it full of rose-bushes and jasmine-hedges, which are as attractive to a maiden of seventeen as cherries to a bird, and who knows whether Louisa might not have been induced to wander in those pleasant groves, had she not been restrained by the thought of Fred riding amongst the roses on the old sorrel-horse, holding a great slice of bread and butter in one hand and a bottle of beer in the other. In spite of her compassion for him she could not help laughing, and so remained safely on this side of the bridge; she liked best to watch Fred from a distance, for the sorrel might have lain down in the pond again, and Fred might have smeared her with the bread and butter. The stupidest lads under the sun may often win the love of girls of seventeen, and even men with only an apology for a heart are sometimes successful, but alas for the young fellow who has ever condescended to wear motley, he can never hope to win his lady's affection, for nothing is so destructive to young love as a hearty fit of laughter.

Louisa could not restrain her laughter when she thought of the ludicrous scene that had just taken place, but she suddenly stopped in the midst of her merriment, for she

felt as if a soft hand had just taken hers, and as if a pair of dark eyes were looking at her affectionately. Perhaps this thought may have come into her head because she caught sight of Frank coming toward her from the distance. The next moment it flashed into her mind that it was Frank on whom Fred wished to be revenged, and so when they met a deep blush overspread her face, and feeling that that was the case made her so angry with herself that she blushed even deeper than before. Frank spoke to her in his usual courteous manner about indifferent things, but she was strangely shy, and answered him at cross-purposes, for her mind was full of Fred and his vows of vengeance.

"Heaven knows what's the matter," thought Frank as he was returning home after having walked a short way with her, "she isn't at all like herself today. Is it my fault? Has she had anything to vex or annoy her? What was that piece of paper she was tearing up?" Meanwhile he had reached the place where he had met her. Some of the bits of paper were still lying on the ground, and he saw on one of them, without picking it up: "*Revenge!* I'll seek for evermore. Frederic Triddelfitz." This made him curious, for he knew Fred's handwriting, so he looked about and found two more bits of paper, but when he put them together he could make nothing more out of them but: "clinging grows * * * that witching hour * * * meet in my lady's bow'r. * * * Spring flowers. * * * I'll cease to * * * from out my sight * * * my sole delight. * * * *Alas!* thou ne'er * * * my *vengeance* dire! * * * The foe * * * *Revenge!!* I'll seek for evermore. Frederic Triddelfitz." The wind had blown away all the rest.

There was not much to be made out of it, but after a time Frank came to the conclusion that Fred Triddelfitz was in love with Louisa, dogged her footsteps, and wanted to be revenged on her for some reason only known to himself. It was a ridiculous affair altogether, but still when he remembered that Fred Triddelfitz was as full of tricks

as a donkey's hide of gray hair, and that he might easily do something that would be of great annoyance to Louisa, Frank determined to keep watch, and not to let Fred out of his sight when he went in the direction of Gürlitz.

Fred had broken the ice, he had spoken, he had done his part, and it was now Louisa's turn to speak if anything was to come of it. He waited, and watched, and got no answer. "It's a horrid shame," he said to himself. "But she isn't up to this sort of thing yet, I must show her what she ought to do." Then he sat down and wrote a letter in a feigned hand.

Address: "To Her that you know of.
Inscription: "Sweet Dream of my soul!

"This letter can tell you nothing, it only contains what is absolutely necessary for you to learn, and you will find it in the *third* rose-bush in the *second* row. I'll tell you the rest by word of mouth, and will only add: Whenever you see a *cross* drawn in white *chalk* on the garden-door, you will find the disclosure of my sentiments under the flower-pot beside the third rose-bush in the second row. The *waving* of a *pocket-handkerchief* on the *Gürlitz* side of the house will be a token of your presence, and of your desiring an interview; *my* signal, on the other hand, will be *whistling* three times on the crook of my stick. (Our shepherd taught me how to do it, and love makes everything easy to learn.) *Randyvoo:* The large ditch to the *right* of the bridge.

"Ever thine!!

"From Him whom you know of."

"P.S. Pardon me for having written this in my shirt-sleeves, it is such a frightfully hot day.— —"

This letter fell into the wrong hands, for it was Mrs. Behrens who found it when she went out to water her flowers, whilst Louisa, who was now a notable little housekeeper, was busy indoors making gooseberry jam. The clergyman's wife had no scruples about opening and reading the letter, and after she had done so she was quite convinced that it was intended for Louisa, and had been written by her nephew Fred.

She could not tell Louisa of her discovery, for that would simply have been playing into Fred's hands, she had there-

fore to content herself with talking of letters in general, and trying to find out in a roundabout kind of way whether Louisa had received any epistles such as she had in her pocket, but as the girl did not understand what she meant, she determined not to tell her pastor what had happened. For, she thought, why should she make him angry by telling him of the foolish boy's love troubles, and besides that, it would have been very painful for her to have to give evidence against her own flesh and blood — and unfortunately Fred was her sister's son. But she wished with all her heart that she could have had a few minutes' quiet talk with the culprit himself, and that was impossible, for she never saw him by any chance.

She was very silent and thoughtful for a few days, and took the entire charge of watering the flowers into her own hands. It was just as well that she did so, for soon afterward she found a letter drenched with rain under the third rose-bush in the second row. This letter was still more to the point than the last:

Address: "To *Her*, the *only* woman I adore.
Inscription: "Soul of my existence!!

"We are surrounded by pitfalls; I am aware that our foe watches my every step. Cowardly *spy*, I *scorn* you! Have no fear, Beloved, I will conquer all difficulties. One bold deed will bring our love *recognition*. At two o'clock tomorrow afternoon, when the *Dragon* is asleep that guards my *treasure*, I shall expect to see your signal with the pocket-handkerchief. As for myself, I shall then be hidden behind the manure heap on the bank beside the large ditch, and shall whistle three times on the crook of my stick to entice you to come to me. And — even though the powers of hell should fight against me — I have sworn to be ever

THINE."

Mrs. Behrens was furious when she read this letter. "'The * * * ! The * * * ! Oh you young rascal! When the dragon is asleep!' The wretch means me by that! But wait a bit! *I*'ll entice *you* to come to *me*, and though the powers of hell won't touch you, if once I get hold of you, I'll give you such a box on the ear as you never had before!"

About two o'clock next day, Mrs. Behrens rose from her sofa and went into the garden. The parlor-door creaked and the garden-door banged as she went out, and the parson, hearing the noise, looked out at the window to see what it was that took his wife out at that unusual hour, for as a general rule she did not move from her sofa till three had struck. He saw her go behind a bush and wave her pocket-handkerchief. "She's making signs to Hawermann, of course," said he, and then he went and lay down again. But the fact of the matter is that she only wanted to show her sister's son how much she longed to get within reach of his ears. But he did not come, nor yet were his three whistles to be heard. She returned to her room very crossly, and when her husband asked her at coffee time to whom she had been making signals in the garden, she was so overwhelmed with confusion that in spite of being a clergyman's wife — I am sorry to have to confess it — she told a lie, and said that she had found it so frightfully close she had been fanning herself a little.

On the third day after that she found another letter:

Address: "To *Her* who is intended for me by *Fate.*
Inscription: "*Sun* of my dark existence!!

"Have you ever suffered the *pains of hell?* I have been enduring them since two o'clock in the afternoon of the day before yesterday when I was hidden behind the manure-heap. The weather was lovely, our *foe* was busy in the clover-field, and your handkerchief was waving in the perfumed air like one of those tumbler pigeons I used to have long ago. I was just about to utter the three *whistles* we had agreed upon, when that stupid old *ass* Bräsig came up to me, and talked to me for a *whole hour by the clock* about the farm. As soon as he was gone I hastened to the ditch, but, *oh agony!* I was terribly disappointed. The time must have seemed very long to you, for you were gone.— But now, *listen.* As soon as I have finished my curds and cream this evening I shall start for the place of *Randyvoo* where I shall be hidden punctually *at half-past eight.* This is Saturday, so the parson will be writing his sermon, and the *Dragon* will be busy, so it is a favorable *opportunity* for us to meet, and the *alder-bushes* will screen us from every eye. (Schiller!) Wait awhile — thy rest comes presently (Göthe) in the *arms* of thy *adorer,* who would *sell* all that is dear to him, if he could *buy* what is dear to thee with the proceeds.

"Again to meet! again to meet!
Till then I fain would sleep;
My longings and my thoughts to steep
In Lethe's waters dark and deep.
My loved one I again shall see,
There's rapture in the thought!
In the hope tomorrow of thee,
My darling, I fear nought.

("The *beginning* is by myself, the *middle* part by Schiller, and the *end* by a certain person called Anonymous who writes a great deal of poetry, but I have altered his lines to suit the present case.)

"*In an agony of longing to see you,* EVER THINE."

"*No!*" cried little Mrs. Behrens when she had read the letter. "This is really too much of a good thing! Ah, my dear sister, I'm sorry for you! Well, it's high time for *other* people to interfere, and I think that being his aunt, I am the proper person to do so. And I will do it," she exclaimed aloud, stamping her foot emphatically, "and I should like to see who'd dare to prevent me!"

"I promise not to interfere with you, Mrs. Behrens," said Bräsig, coming from behind the bee-hives.

"Have you been listening, Bräsig?" asked Mrs. Behrens rather sharply. "'Listening!' I never listen! I only keep my ears open, and then I hear what's going on; and I keep my eyes open, and see what passes before me. For instance, I see that you are very cross." "Yes, but it's enough to drive an angel wild." "Ah, Mrs. Behrens, the angels are wild enough already in all conscience, but we don't need to speak of them just now, for I believe that the devil himself is going about Pümpelhagen." "Goodness gracious me! Has Fred * * * ?" "No," answered Bräsig, "I don't know what it is, but certainly there's something up." "How?" "Mrs. Behrens, Hawermann is in a bad humor, and that is enough to show you that something unpleasant is going on. When I went to Pümpelhagen last week I found him busy with the hay and rape-harvest, and said: 'Good-morning,' I said. 'Good-morning,' said he. 'Charles,' I began, and was going to have said something

when he interrupted me by asking: 'Have you seen Triddelfitz anywhere?' 'Yes,' I answered. 'Where?' he asked. 'Sitting in the large ditch,' I said. 'Did you see young Mr. von Rambow?' he asked. 'He's sitting in the next ditch close behind Fred,' I replied. 'What are they doing?' he asked. 'Playing,' I said. 'You don't give me much comfort,' he said, '*playing*, when there's so much to be done!' 'Yes, Charles,' I said, 'and I played with them.' 'What were you playing at?' he asked. 'We had a game at 'I spy,' Charles. You must understand that your gray-hound was peeping over the edge of the ditch toward Gürlitz, and your young nobleman was watching the gray-hound, so I hid myself in the marl-pit, and watched them both. Whenever one of them turned the others ducked, so there we sat peeping and ducking till at last I found it a very tiresome amusement, and, leaving my hiding-place, went to join Mr. von Rambow.' 'Good-day,' I said. 'Good-day,' he replied. 'Pardon me,' I said, 'but which of your farming-operations is it that is occupying your attention just now?' 'I,' he stammered, 'w—wanted to see how the peas were getting on!' 'H'm!' I said. 'Ah!' I said. 'I understand.' Then I bade him 'good-by,' and went to have a look at the gray-hound. Don't be angry, Mrs. Behrens, but that's what I always call your nephew.'' ''Not at all, not at all!'' cried the little lady, though her own name for him was different. Then Bräsig continued: '' 'Good-day,' I said, 'may I ask what you are doing here?' 'Oh, nothing in particular,' he said, looking rather foolish, 'I'm only looking at the peas.' 'Now, Charles,' I said, 'if you can get the peas staked by setting those two lads to look at them, why all that I can say is that you're a deuced lucky fellow.' 'The devil take it!' he said, 'they're both up to some folly. Mr. von Rambow is quite changed this summer, he isn't like the same person. He goes about in a dream, forgets all that I tell him, and so I can't rely on him as I used to do. And as for that other stupid dolt, he's worse than ever.' Now, Mrs. Behrens, pray don't be

angry with Hawermann for calling your nephew a 'stupid dolt.'" "Certainly not," replied Mrs. Behrens, "for that's just what he is." "Well, you see that all happened a week ago, but this morning I went out early with my fishing-rod to try whether I couldn't catch a few trout, when just as I was coming in this direction I caught sight of your nephew, the gray-hound. He slipped cautiously into the garden, and after remaining there for a few minutes, came out again. Meanwhile I perceived that the young nobleman was watching him from amongst the thorn-bushes by the side of the ditch; but what was my astonishment when I saw that my good old friend Charles Hawermann was following them on the hill-side. I brought up the rear, and so we all went on in single file quite round the village, and I couldn't help laughing when I thought that each of us only knew of the presence of the game he was stalking, and was totally unaware that he himself was being stalked in his turn. We're all to be at it again tomorrow I believe, for Hawermann, who has followed them twice already, is determined to get to the bottom of the mystery; so if either you or the parson has a fancy to join us in the hunt, you can follow me." "Thanks very much," said Mrs. Behrens, "but I've got my part to play already. Bräsig, can you keep a secret?" "Like a safe when the padlock is on," he answered. "No, no. Do be serious. Can you be silent?" "I beg your pardon," he said gravely, and clapped his hand on his mouth in token of shame at his ill-timed jesting, though had any one else done it, he would have given him a black eye for his pains. "Why well then, listen," said Mrs. Behrens, who now proceeded to relate all that she knew of the affair. "Wheugh!" whistled Bräsig, "what a fool that nephew of yours is." Mrs. Behrens then read him the letters she had found. "Hang it," cried Bräsig, "where did the young rascal get that grand way of expressing himself. Stupid as he is in other matters, he can write much better than one would expect." When she came to the bit about the dragon Bräsig laughed heartily, and said:

"That's you, Mrs. Behrens, that's you!" "I know," she answered sharply, "but the ass in the third letter is intended for you, so neither of us need laugh at the other. But now, Bräsig, you see that it's quite necessary that I should get hold of the little wretch, and box his ears well for him." "You're quite right, and it's easily managed. Listen. You and I must hide at the bottom of the garden at eight o'clock this evening; at half past eight, Louisa must take her place in the ditch, and you'll see that he'll come like a bear to wild honey; and then we'll spring out upon him, and take him prisoner before he knows where he is." "That won't do at all, Bräsig. If I were going to act in that sort of way I shouldn't require your help. It would be a great misfortune if Louisa were ever to know anything about this, and I'd rather that neither Hawermann nor even my pastor should hear of it." "H'm, h'm!" said Bräsig. "Then * * * then * * * Stop! I have it now. Mrs. Behrens, you must make yourself as thin as possible, put on Louisa's clothes, and go to the *randyvoo* in her stead. Then, as soon as he is seated by your side, and is on the point of kissing you, you must seize him by the scruff of the neck, and hold on till I come." "Nay, Bräsig, that would never do!" "Don't you think so, Mrs. Behrens? You understand that if he doesn't see his sweet-heart in the ditch, you'll never manage to inveigle him there; and if we don't nab him unexpectedly, we'll never succeed in catching him, for he's a long-legged, thin-flanked greyhound, and if it came to a race, we'd be nowhere with our short legs and round bodies." It was quite true; but no! she go to a *rendezvous*? And Bräsig was very stupid, how could she ever get into Louisa's gown? But Bräsig would not be convinced, he maintained that it was the only way in which she could get the interview she wanted with her nephew, and assured her that all she had to do was to put on Louisa's shawl and Leghorn hat, and then go and sit on the edge of the ditch. "You must remember to sit down," he continued, "for if you remain standing he will see at

once that you're a foot shorter, and at least a foot broader than Louisa." At last — at last Mrs. Behrens allowed herself to be persuaded, and when she went out at the back-door about eight o'clock that evening, wearing Louisa's shawl and hat, the parson who was standing at his study-window thinking over his sermon, said to himself wonderingly: "What on earth is Regina doing with Louisa's hat and shawl? And there's Bräsig coming out of the arbor. He must want to speak to me about something — but it's a very odd thing altogether!"

Mrs. Behrens went down the garden path with Bräsig feeling ready for anything that might befall. She opened the garden-gate and went out alone, leaving Bräsig squatted under the hedge like a great toad, but no sooner was she by herself than her courage oozed away, and she said: "Come to the ditch with me, Bräsig, you're too far away there, and must be close at hand to help me when I've caught him." "All right!" said Bräsig, and he accompanied her to the ditch.

Canal-like ditches such as this are no longer to be found in all the country-side, for the thorough system of drainage to which the land has been subjected has done away with their use; but every farmer will remember them in the old time. They were from fifteen to twenty feet wide at the top, but tapered away till quite narrow at the bottom, and were fringed with thorns and other bushwood. They were generally dry except in spring and autumn, when there was a foot or a foot and half of water in them, or in summer for a day or two after a thunder-storm. That was the case now. "Bräsig hide yourself behind that thorn so that you may come to the rescue at once." "Very well," said Bräsig. "But, Mrs. Behrens," he continued after a pause, "you must think of a signal to call me to your help." "Yes," she said. "Of course! But what shall it be? Wait! when I say: '*The Philistines be upon thee,*' spring upon him." I understand, Mrs. Behrens!"

"Goodness gracious me!" thought the clergyman's wife.

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BETWEEN DANCES

BENJAMIN VAUTIER

"I feel as if I were quite a Delilah. Going to a *rendezvous* at half past eight in the evening! At my age too! Ah me, in my old age I'm going to do what I should have been ashamed of when I was a girl." Then aloud. "Bräsig don't puff so loud any one could hear you a mile off." Resuming her soliloquy: "And all for the sake of a boy, a mischievous wretch of a boy. Good gracious! If my pastor knew what I was about!" Aloud. "What are you laughing at, Bräsig? I forbid you to laugh, it's very silly of you." "I didn't laugh, Mrs. Behrens." "Yes, you *did*, I heard you distinctly." "I only yawned, Mrs. Behrens, it's such frightfully slow work lying here." "You oughtn't to yawn at such a time. I'm trembling all over. Oh, you little wretch, what misery you have caused me! I can't tell any one what you've made me suffer, and must just bear it in silence. It was God who sent Bräsig to my help." Suddenly Bräsig whispered in great excitement, his voice sounding like the distant cry of a corn-crake: "Mrs. Behrens, draw yourself out till you're as long as Lewerenz's child;* make yourself as thin as you possibly can, and put on a pretty air of confusion, for I see him coming over the crest of the hill. His figure stands out clearly against the sky." Little Mrs. Behrens felt as if her heart had stopped beating, and her anger waxed hotter against the boy who had brought her into such a false position. She was so much ashamed of herself for being where she was, that she would most assuredly have run away if Bräsig had not laughed again, but as soon as she heard that laugh, she determined to stay and show him that he was engaged in a much more serious undertaking than he seemed to imagine.

It was quite true that Bräsig had laughed this time, for he saw a second and then a third black figure following the first down the hill. "Ha, ha, ha!" he chuckled in his hiding-place in the thorn-bush, "there's Charles Hawer-

* *Translator's note.*— A common saying in Mecklenburg, the origin of which is unknown.

mann too! I declare the whole overseeing force of Pümpelhagen is coming down here to see how the peas are growing in the dusk of evening. It's as good as a play!" Mrs. Behrens did not see the others, she only saw her sister's son who was coming rapidly toward her. He hastened over the bridge, ran along the bank, sprang to her side, and threw his arms round her neck, exclaiming: "Sweet angel!" "Oh you wicked little wretch!" cried his aunt trying to seize him in the way Bräsig had desired her, but instead of that she only caught hold of the collar of his coat. Then she called out as loudly as she could: "The Philistines be upon thee!" and immediately Bräsig the Philistine started to his feet. Confound it! His foot had gone to sleep! But never mind! He hopped down the bank as quickly as he could, taking into consideration that one leg felt as if it had a hundred-and-eighty pound weight attached to the end of it, but just as he was close upon his prey he tripped over a low thorn-bush and tumbled right into the foot and a half of water. And there he sat as immovably as if he had gone back to the hydropathic establishment, and were in the enjoyment of a sitz-bath! Fred stood as if he had been turned to stone, and felt as though he were suffering from a douche-bath, for his dear aunt was clutching him tightly and scolding him to her heart's content: "The dragon has caught you now my boy! Yes, the dragon has caught you!" "And here comes the ass," shouted Bräsig picking himself out of the water and running toward him. But Fred had now recovered from his astonishment. He shook himself free from his aunt, and darting up the bank would have escaped had he not at the same moment encountered a new enemy — Frank. In another second Hawermann had joined them, and Mrs. Behrens had scarcely recovered from the shock of seeing him, when her pastor came up, and said: "What's the matter, Regina? What does all this mean?" The poor little lady's consternation was indescribable, but Bräsig, from whose clothes the water was running in streams, was

too angry to hold his tongue, and exclaimed: "You confounded rascal! You gray-hound!" giving Fred a hearty dig in the ribs as he spoke. "It's all your fault that I shall have another attack of gout. But now, I'll tell you what, every one shall know what a d—d Jesuit you are. Hawermann, he * * *" "For God's sake," cried Mrs. Behrens, "don't attend to a single word that Bräsig says. Hawermann, Mr. von Rambow, the whole thing is ended and done with. It's all over now, and what has still to be done or said can quite well be managed by my pastor alone; it's a family matter and concerns no one but ourselves. Isn't that the case, my dear Fred? It's merely a family matter I assure you, and no one has anything to do with it but we two. But now, come away, my boy, we'll tell my pastor all about it. Good-night, Mr. von Rambow. Good-night, Hawermann, Fred will soon follow you. Come away, Bräsig, you must go to bed at once."

And so she managed to disperse the assembly. The two who were left in ignorance of what had happened, went home separately, shaking their heads over the affair. Hawermann was indignant with his two young people, and put out because he was to have no explanation of their conduct. Frank was mistrustful of everyone; he had recognized Louisa's hat and shawl in spite of the darkness, and thought that the mystery must have something to do with her, though how he was unable to conjecture.

Fred was much cast down in spirit. The clergyman and his wife went on in front of him, and the latter told her husband the whole story from beginning to end, scolding her hopeful nephew roundly the whole time. The procession moved on toward the parsonage, and as the evil-doer guessed that a bad half-hour awaited him there, he had serious thoughts of making his escape while it was possible, but Bräsig came as close up to him as if he had known what he was thinking of, and that only made him rage and chafe the more inwardly. When Bräsig asked Mrs. Behrens who it was that had come up in the nick of time, and she had

answered that it was Frank, Triddelfitz stood still and shaking his fist in the direction of Pümpelhagen, said fiercely: "I am betrayed, and *she* will be sold, sold to that man because of his rank and position!" "Boy!" cried Mrs. Behrens, "will you hold your tongue!" "Hush, Regina," said her husband, who had now a pretty good idea of what had taken place, "now please go in and see that Bräsig's room is prepared, and get him sent to bed as quickly as you can. I will remain here and speak to Fred."

This was done. The parson appealed to Fred's common sense, but his sense of injury far exceeded that other, and his spirit seethed and boiled like wine in the process of fermentation. He put aside all the clergyman's gentle arguments, and declared passionately that his own aunt had determined to destroy the whole happiness of his life, and that she cared more for the rich aristocrat than for her sister's son.

Within the house matters were going on in the same unsatisfactory manner; uncle Bräsig refused to go to bed in spite of all Mrs. Behren's entreaties. "I can't," he said, "that is to say, I can, but I musn't do it; for I must go to Rexow. I had a letter from Mrs. Nüssler saying that she wanted my help." The same yeast which had caused Fred to seethe and boil over was working in him, but more quietly, because it had been a part of his being for a longer time. At last, however, he was persuaded to go to bed as a favor to Mrs. Behrens, and from fear of bringing on an attack of gout by remaining in his wet things, but his thoughts were as full of anxious affection for Mrs. Nüssler as Fred's were of love for Louisa when on leaving the parsonage he exclaimed passionately: "Give her up, does he say! Give her up! The devil take that young sprig of the nobility!"

Next day—it was Sunday morning—when Bräsig awoke, he gave himself a comfortable stretch in the soft bed. "A luxury," he said to himself, "that I've never before enjoyed, but I suppose one would soon get accus-

tomed to it." Just as he was about to get up the housemaid came in, and taking possession of his clothes, placed a black coat, waistcoat and pair of trousers over the back of a chair in their stead.

"Ho, ho!" he said with a laugh as he examined the black suit, "it's Sunday, and this is a parsonage; but surely they never think that I'm going to preach today!" He lifted one article of clothing after the other curiously, and then said: "Ah! I see now, it's because mine were wet through in the ditch last night, so they've given me a suit belonging to his Reverence. All right then!—here goes." But it did not go so easily after all! And as for comfort, that was totally out of the question. The trousers were a very good length, but were frightfully tight. The lower buttons of the waistcoat could neither be coaxed nor forced into the button-holes, and when he put on the coat, there was an ominous cracking somewhere between the shoulders. As for his arms, they stood out from his body as if he were prepared to press the whole world to his faithful heart on this particular Sunday.

After he was dressed he went down stairs, and joined Mrs. Behrens in the parlor. As to his legs, he looked and walked very much as he had done ever since he had received his pension; but as to the upper part of his body! Mrs. Behrens burst out laughing when she saw him, and immediately took refuge behind the breakfast table, for he advanced with his arms outstretched as if he wished to make her the first recipient of his world-embrace. "Keep away from me, Bräsig!" she laughed. "If I had ever imagined that my pastor's good clothes would have looked so ridiculous on you I'd have let you remain in bed till dinner-time, for your own things won't be washed and dried before that." "Oh, ho!" laughed Bräsig, "that was the reason you sent me these things, was it? I thought perhaps you wanted to dress me up for another *randyvoo* today." "Now, just listen to me, Bräsig!" said little Mrs. Behrens, blushing furiously. "I forbid you to make such

jokes. And when you're going about in the neighborhood —you have nothing to do now except to carry gossip from one house to another—if you ever tell any one about that wretched *rendezvous* of last night—I'll never speak to you again." "Mrs. Behrens, you may trust me not to do that," here he went nearer the clergyman's wife with both arms outstretched, and she once more retreated behind the table. "Indeed, you've nothing to fear. I'm not a Jesuit." "No, Bräsig, you're an old heathen, but you arn't a Jesuit. But if you say anything about it * * * Oh me! Hawermann must be told, my pastor says so. But if he asks about it, don't mention my name, please. Oh, dear! If the Pomuchelskopps were ever to hear of it, I should be the most miserable of women. God knows, Bräsig, that what I did, I did for the best, and for the sake of that innocent child. I've sacrificed myself for her." "That's quite true," answered Bräsig with conviction, "and so don't let fretting over it give you any gray hairs. Look here. If Charles Hawermann asks me how you came to be there, I'll say— I'll say—h'm!—I'll say that you had arranged a *randyvoo* with me." "*You!* Fie, for shame!" "Nay, Mrs. Behrens, I don't see that. Am I not as good as the young gray-hound any day? And don't our ages suit better?" And as he spoke he looked as innocently surprised at her displeasure as if he had proposed the best possible way out of the difficulty. Mrs. Behrens looked at him dubiously, and then said, folding her hands on her lap: "Bräsig, I'll trust to you to say nothing you ought not to say. But Bräsig—dear Bräsig, do nothing absurd. And * * * and * * * come and sit down, and drink a cup of coffee." She took hold of his stiff arm and drew him to the table, much as a miller draws the sails of a windmill when he wants to set it going.

"Thank you," said Bräsig. He managed to get hold of the handle of the cup after a struggle, and lifted it as if he were a juggler and the cup were at least a hundred pounds in weight, and as if he wanted to make sure that all the

audience saw it properly. Then he tried to sit down, but the moment he bent his knees a horrible cracking noise was heard, and he drew himself up again hastily — whether it was the chair or the trousers that cracked he did not know. He therefore drank his coffee standing, and said: it didn't matter, for he hadn't time to sit down, he must go to Mrs. Nüssler at once because of her letter. Mrs. Behrens implored him to wait until his clothes were dry, but in vain; Mrs. Nüssler's slightest wish was regarded by him as a command, and was inscribed as such in the order-book of his conscience. So he set out for Rexow along the Pümpelhagen road, the long tails of his clerical garment floating behind him. His progress was as slow and difficult as that of a young rook learning to fly.

As he passed Pümpelhagen, Hawermann saw him, and called him to stop, adding: "Bless me, Zachariah, why are you dressed so oddly?" "An accident, nothing but an accident. You remember that I fell into the muddy water in the ditch last night. But I hav'n't time to stop now, I must go to your sister." "My sister's business can wait better than mine, Bräsig. I've noticed lately that a great many things are going on behind my back that I'm not wanted to know. It wouldn't have mattered so much, but that I saw last night that both the parson and his wife are better informed than I am, and that these good people want to hide the true state of the case from me out of the kindness of their hearts." "You're right, Charles. It is out of kindness." "Certainly, Bräsig, and I am not mistrustful of them, but I can't help thinking that it's something that concerns me very nearly, and that I ought to know. What were you doing yesterday evening?" "I, Charles? I was just having a *randyvoo* with Mrs. Behrens in the ditch." "And the parson?" "We knew nothing of what brought him, Charles. He took us by surprise when he came." "What had Mr. von Rambow to do with it?" "He caught your gray-hound by the scruff of the neck, and perhaps threw me into the water by accident." "*What*

had Fred Triddelfitz to do with it?" asked Hawermann impressively," and " what had Louisa's hat and shawl got to do with it?" " Nothing more than that they didn't fit Mrs. Behrens at all, for she's far too stout to wear them." " Zachariah," said Hawermann, stretching his hand toward his friend over the low hedge, " you are trying to put me off. *Won't* you tell me what is the matter, we are such old friends — or is it that you must not tell me?" " The devil take the *randyvoo* and Mrs. Behrens' anxiety," cried Bräsig, seizing Hawermann's hand and shaking it vehemently over the hedge and amongst the tall nettles that grew there, till the smart of the stings made them both draw back. " I'll tell you, Charles. The parson's going to tell you himself, so why shouldn't I? Fred Triddelfitz fell in love with you sometime ago, most likely because of the good fatherly advice you have often given him, and now it seems his love for you has passed on to your daughter. Love always passes on, for example with me from your sister to Mina." " Do be serious, Bräsig!" "Am I not always in earnest, Charles, when I speak of your sister and Mina?" " I am sure you are," cried Hawermann, seizing his friend's hand again in spite of the nettles, " but, tell me, what had Frank to do with it?" " I think that he must have fallen in love with you too, and that his love has also passed on from you to your daughter." " That would be a great pity," cried Hawermann, " a very great pity. God only knows how it's to be stopped." " I'm not so sure, Charles, that you're right in thinking it a misfortune, for he has two estates * * *" " Don't talk about that, Bräsig, but come in and tell me all that you know."

As soon as Bräsig had told as much as he knew of the affair, he set off down the footpath that led to Rexow. Hawermann stood and watched him till he was out of sight, and then said to himself: " He's a good man, his heart's in the right place, and if I find that it is so, I will * * * but * * * but * * * !" He was not thinking of Bräsig when he said this, but of Frank.

[When uncle Bräsig had reached Rexow, he was consulted on a matter of great consequence. Two young nephews of Joseph Nüssler, Godfrey Baldrian and Rudolph Kurz, had asked permission to spend the weeks before their examinations — both were students of theology — at Rexow. Should they be invited to come? Godfrey was all right, a serious-minded youth, but Rudolph, although a good sort of a fellow, was frivolous, he had even fought a duel in Rostock for the sake of a merchant's pretty daughter. Was there any danger of Lina and Mina falling in love? "Bräsig," Joseph said, "you see it might quite well happen, and what are we as their parents to do?" "Let them alone, Joseph!" he replied. "Why does God send young folks into the world, if he does not intend them to love each other? But the little round-heads!" His advice was finally taken, and the two young men were soon settled at the Nüssler home. At first everything went well, but after a while difficulties arose, and uncle Bräsig was again called upon for advice.]

Bräsig went to Rexow that morning to see Mrs. Nüssler as he had intended. The crown-prince was in the doorway when he arrived, and came forward to meet him with such a hearty wag of the tail that any one would have thought him a most christian-minded dog, and would have imagined that he had quite forgiven Bräsig the fright he had given him the last time he was at Rexow. There was a look of such quiet satisfaction in his yellow brown eyes that one would have thought that everything was going on well in the house; that Mrs. Nüssler was busy in the kitchen, and that Joseph was comfortably seated in his own particular arm-chair. But it was not so. When Bräsig went into the parlor he certainly found Joseph in his old place, but Mrs. Nüssler was standing in front of him, and was giving him a lecture about caring for nothing, and never interfering when things were going wrong, although it was his duty to do so. As soon as she saw Bräsig, she went up

to him and said angrily: "And *you* keep out of the way, Bräsig. Every one may be standing on their heads here for anything *you* care, and it's all your fault that we ever took those two lads into the house." "Gently," said Bräsig. "Gently! Don't excite yourself, Mrs. Nüssler! Well what's all this about the divinity students?" "A very great deal! But I should never have said a word about it, for they're Joseph's relations, and 'it's an ill bird that soils its own nest!' There has been no peace or comfort in the house since the two young men have been here, and if it goes on like this much longer, I'm afraid that I shall have a quarrel with Joseph himself." "Mother," said young Joseph, "what can I do?" "Hold your tongue, young Joseph," cried Bräsig, "it's all your fault. Why didn't you teach them better manners?" "Come, come, Bräsig," said Mrs. Nüssler, "just leave Joseph to me if you please, and remember it's your fault this time. You promised to keep an eye on the young men, and see that they didn't get into mischief, and instead of that, you let one of them do what he likes and never trouble your head to see what he's after, while you encourage the other to spend all his time in fishing and such like nonsense, instead of minding his books, so that he's always out in the fields, and comes home in the evening with a lot of perch about the length of my finger, and when I think the day's work is over, I'm expected to go back to the kitchen and cook that trash!" "What!" cried Bräsig. "Does he only bring you in such tiny little fish? That's queer now, for I've shown him all the best pools for catching large perch. Then you must * * *! Just wait!" "I'll tell you," interrupted Mrs. Nüssler, "you must forbid him to fish, for he didn't come here to do that. His father sent him here to learn something, and he's coming to see him this very afternoon." "Well, Mrs. Nüssler," said Bräsig, "I can't help admiring the persistency with which he has followed my advice about fishing. Hasn't he done anything else though?" "A great deal, both of them have done a great

deal. I've never spoken about it because they're Joseph's relations, and at first everything went on *pretty* well. It was an idle, merry life at first; my two little girls were very much brightened up by the change and all went on smoothly. Mina here, and Rudolph there, Lina here, and Godfrey there. They talked sense with Godfrey and nonsense with Rudolph. The two lads worked away properly at their books in the morning; Godfrey indeed sometimes read so long that it gave him a headache, and Rudolph did quite a fair amount of study. But that did not last long. They soon began to quarrel and wrangle about theological questions, and Godfrey, who knows more than the other, said that Rudolph did not speak from a Christian standpoint." "Did he say 'standpoint'?" put in Bräsig. "Yes, that was his very word," answered Mrs. Nüssler. "Oho!" said Bräsig. "I think I hear him. While other people end with standpoint, Methodists always begin with it. And then I suppose he wanted to convert him?" "Yes," said Mrs. Nüssler. "That's just what he wanted to do. But you see the other lad is much cleverer than Godfrey, and made so many jokes about all that he said, that at last Godfrey quite lost his temper, and so the discomfort in the house grew worse and worse. I don't know how it was, but my two girls mixed themselves up in the quarrel. Lina who is the gravest and most sensible took Godfrey's side of the argument, and Mina laughed and giggled over Rudolph's jokes." "Yes," interrupted Joseph, "it's all according to circumstances!" "You ought to be ashamed of yourself, young Joseph," said Bräsig, "for allowing such a Hophnei to remain in the house." "Nay, Bräsig," said Mrs. Nüssler, "let Joseph alone, he did his best to make matters comfortable again. When Godfrey talked about the devil till we all felt quite eerie, Joseph believed in his existence; and when Rudolph laughed at, and ridiculed all belief in him, Joseph laughed as heartily as anyone. When the dispute ran highest, my little Mina took all Godfrey's books to Rudolph's room, and all Rudolph's

to Godfrey's, and when the young men looked rather cross, she said quickly, that they'd better both study the subject thoroughly, and then perhaps they might agree better about it than at present." "Mina's a clever little woman," cried Bräsig. "Well," continued Mrs. Nüssler, "they didn't like it at all at first; but whatever Godfrey's faults may be, he's a good-natured lad, so he began to study Rudolph's books. And the other at last set to work at Godfrey's, for you see it was wintry weather and it gave him something to do. You should have seen them a short time afterward! They had changed as much as their books. Godfrey made poor jokes about the devil, and Rudolph sighed and groaned, and spoke of the devil as if he knew him intimately, and as if he were accustomed to sit down to dinner with us every day and to eat his potatoes like any other honest man. Then my little girls turned right round. Mina took Godfrey's part; and Lina took Rudolph's, for Rudolph said that Godfrey didn't speak from a Christian standpoint." "Ugh!" said Bräsig, "he oughtn't to have said that. But wait a bit! Is he really that sort of fellow, and can't he ever catch a good-sized perch?" "And then," cried Mrs. Nüssler indignantly, "they were all at sixes and sevens again, because of that horrible perch fishing, for as soon as spring returned and the perch began to bite, Rudolph cared no more about the Christian standpoint. He took his fishing-rod, and went out after you all day long. The other went back to his old opinion about the existence of the devil, you see he was preparing for his examination and couldn't get through it properly without that. My two girls didn't know which of their cousins to trust to." "They're a couple of rascals," cried Bräsig, "but it's all the Methodist's fault, what business had he to bother the other about the devil and the Christian standpoint?" "No, no, Bräsig, I've nothing to say against him for that. He has learnt something, has passed his examination, and may be ordained any day. But Rudolph does nothing at all, he only makes mischief in the house." "Why, what has

he been after now? Has he been fishing for whitings?" asked Bräsig raising his eyebrows. "Whitings!" said Mrs. Nüssler scornfully. "He has been fishing for a sermon. You must know that Mrs. Baldrian wanted to hear her son preach, so she asked the clergyman at Rahnstädt to let him preach in his church, and he said he might do so. She then went and told her sister what she had done, and Mrs. Kurz was very much put out that her son wasn't as far on as his cousin, so she went to the old parson too and asked him to allow Rudolph to preach for him some day soon. Well the clergyman was so far left to himself as to arrange that Rudolph should preach on the same day as Godfrey. The two young men had a great argument as to which was to have the forenoon and which the afternoon, but at last it was settled that Rudolph should preach in the morning. Well, Godfrey set to work as hard as he could, and spent the whole day from morning till evening in the arbor. As he has a bad memory he learnt his sermon by repeating it aloud. Rudolph did nothing but amuse himself as usual, till the two last days, when he seated himself on the grass bank behind the arbor, and seemed to be thinking over his sermon. On the Sunday morning, Joseph drove the two young clergymen and us to Rahnstädt. We went into the parsonage pew, and I can assure you I was in a great fright about Rudolph, but the rogue stood there as calmly as if he were quite sure of himself, and when the time came for him to preach, he went up into the pulpit and began his sermon. He got on so well that every one listened attentively, and I was so pleased with the boy that I turned to whisper to Godfrey, who sat next to me, how relieved and overjoyed I was, when I saw that he was moving about restlessly in his seat, and looking as if he would like to jump up and pull Rudolph out of the pulpit: 'Aunt,' he said, 'that is *my* sermon.' And so it was, Bräsig. The little wretch had got it by heart from hearing his cousin learning it aloud in the arbor." "Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Bräsig. "What a joke! What a capital joke!" "Do you call it a *joke?*"

said Mrs. Nüssler angrily. "Do you call playing a trick like that in God's house a joke?" "Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bräsig. "I know that it's wicked to laugh, and I know that only the devil could have prompted the lad to play such a trick, but I can't help it, I must laugh at it all the same." "Oh, of course," said Mrs. Nüssler crossly, "of course *you* do nothing but laugh while we are like to break our hearts with grief and anger." "Never mind me," said Bräsig soothingly, "tell me, what did the Methodist do? Ha, ha, ha! I'd have given a good deal for a sight of his face!" "You would, would you? Of course he couldn't preach the same sermon in the afternoon, so the parson had to give his people one of his old sermons over again; but he was very angry, and said that if he chose to make the circumstance public, Rudolph might go and hang himself on the first willow he came across." "But the Methodist?" "The poor fellow was miserable, but he didn't say a word. However his mother said enough for two, and she spoke so harshly to her sister Mrs. Kurz about what had happened, that they're no longer on speaking terms. There was a frightful quarrel. I was both ashamed and angry at the way they went on, for both Baldrian and Kurz joined in the squabble, and even Joseph began to mix himself up in it, but fortunately our carriage drove up, and I got him away as quickly as I could." "What did the duelist say?" "Oh, the wretch was wise enough to run away here as soon as he had concluded his stolen sermon." "And you gave him a regular good scolding, I suppose," said Bräsig. "Not I indeed," said Mrs. Nüssler decidedly. "I wasn't going to put my finger in that pie. His father is coming today and he is 'the nearest' to him, as Mrs. Behrens would say; and I've told Joseph that he's not to mix himself up in the affair or to talk about it at all. He's quite changed latterly. He has got into the habit of putting up his back and meddling with things with which he has nothing to do. Now just keep quiet, Joseph." "Yes, Joseph, hold your tongue," said Bräsig. "And my two girls," continued

Mrs. Nüssler, "are quite different from what they used to be. Since that unlucky sermon their eyes have always been red with crying, and they've gone about the house as quietly as mice. They hardly ever say a word to each other now, though they used never to be separate, and when one of them was happy or unhappy the other had to know all about it immediately. My household is all at odds." "Mother," said young Joseph rising from his chair with a look of determination, "that's just what I say, and I *will* speak; you'll see that the boys have put it into their heads." "What have they put into their heads, Joseph?" asked Mrs. Nüssler crossly. "Love affairs," said Joseph, sinking back into his corner. "My dear mother always used to say that when a divinity student and a governess were in the same house * * * And you'll see the truth of it with Godfrey and Mina." "Law, Joseph! How you do talk to be sure! May God preserve you in your right mind! That's all nonsense, but if it were the case, the divinity student should leave the house at once and Rudolph too. Come away, Bräsig, I've got something to say to you."

As soon as they had left the house, Mrs. Nüssler signed to Bräsig to follow her into the garden, and when they were seated in the arbor, she said: "I can't stand Joseph's eternal chatter any longer, Bräsig. It was Rudolph who taught him to speak so much by continually encouraging him to talk last winter, and he has got into the habit now and won't give it up. But, tell me honestly — remember you promised to watch — have you seen anything of the kind going on?" "Bless me! No. Not the faintest approach to anything of the sort." "I can't think it either," said Mrs. Nüssler thoughtfully. "At first Lina and Godfrey, and Mina and Rudolph used to go about together. Afterward Mina took to Godfrey, and Lina to Rudolph, but ever since the examination Lina and Godfrey have been on their old terms with each other once more, while Mina and Rudolph have never made friends again; indeed I may say that she has never so much as looked at him since

the day he preached in Rahnstädt." "Ah, Mrs. Nüssler," said Bräsig, "love shows itself in most unexpected ways. Sometimes the giving of a bunch of flowers is a sign of it, or even a mere 'good-morning' accompanied by a shake of the hand. Sometimes it is shown by two people stooping at the same moment to pick up a ball of cotton that one of them has dropped, when all that the looker-on sees is that they knocked their heads together in trying which could pick it up first. But gradually the signs become more apparent. The girl blushes now and then, and the man watches whatever she does; or the girl takes the man into the larder, and gives him sausages, or cold tongue, or pig's cheek, and the man begins to wear a blue or a red necktie; but the surest sign of all is when they go out on a summer-evening for a walk in the moonlight, and you hear them sigh without any cause. Now, has anything of that kind been going on with the little round-heads?" "No, I can't say that I've noticed them doing that, Bräsig. They used to go to the cold meat-larder sometimes it's true, but I soon put an end to that; I wasn't going to stand that sort of thing; and as for blushing, I didn't notice them doing that either, though of course I've seen that their eyes are often red with crying." "Well," said Bräsig, "there must have been a reason for that—I'll tell you what, Mrs. Nüssler, you just leave the whole management of the affair in my hands, for I know how to arrange such matters. I soon put an end to that sort of nonsense in Fred Triddelfitz. I'm an old hunter, and I'll ferret the matter out for you, but you must tell me where they generally meet." "Here, Bräsig, here in this arbor. My girls sit here in the afternoon with their work, and then the other two join them. I never thought any harm of it." "All right!" said Bräsig, going out of the arbor, and looking about him. He examined a large cherry-tree carefully which was growing close by, and seeing that it was thickly covered with leaves he looked quite satisfied. "That'll do," he said, "what can be done, shall be done." "Goodness, gracious me!" said

Mrs. Nüssler, "I wonder what will happen this afternoon! It's very disagreeable. Kurz is coming at coffee-time, and he is desperately angry with his son for playing such a trick on his cousin. You'll see that there will be a terrible scene." "That's always the way with these little people," said Bräsig, "when the head and the lower part of the constitution are too near each other, the nature is always fiery." "Ah!" sighed Mrs. Nüssler as she entered the parlor, "it'll be a miserable afternoon."

She little knew that misery had long ago taken up its abode in her house.

Whilst these arrangements were being made down-stairs the twins were busy sewing in their garret-room. Lina was seated at one window, and Mina at the other; they never looked up from their work, and never spoke to each other as in the old days at Mrs. Behrens' sewing-class. They worked away as busily as if the world had been torn in two, and they had to sew up the rent with their needles and thread, while their serious faces and deep sighs showed that they were fully aware of the gravity of their employment. It was strange that their mother had not told Bräsig how sadly pale they had grown. The change must have been very gradual for her not to have noticed it. But so it was. The two apple-cheeked maidens looked as if they had been growing on the north-side of the tree of life, where no sunbeams could ever come to brighten their existence, and tinge their cheeks with healthful color. They could no longer be likened to two apples growing on one stalk. At last Lina's work fell on her lap, she could go on sewing no more, her eyes were so full of tears, and then large drops began to roll slowly down her pale cheeks; Mina took out her handkerchief and wiped her eyes, for her tears were falling upon her work, and so the two little sisters sat weeping each in her own window, as if all her happiness were gone past recall.

Suddenly Mina jumped up, and ran out of the room as if she must go out into the fresh air, but she stopped short on

the landing, for she remembered that her mother might see her and ask her what was the matter, so she remained outside the door crying silently. And then Lina started up to go and comfort Mina; but she suddenly remembered that she did not know what to say to her, so she remained standing within the room beside the door, crying also. It often happens that a thin wall of separation rises between two loving hearts, and while each would give anything to get back to the other, neither will be the first to turn the handle — for in every such partition wall there is a door with a handle on each side of it — and so they remain apart in spite of their longing to be reconciled.

But fortunately the twins were not so selfishly proud as to allow this state of matters to go on for ever. Mina opened the door, and said: "Why are you crying, Lina?" and Lina immediately stretched out both hands to her sister, and said: "Oh, Mina, why are you crying?" Then they fell upon each other's necks and cried again, and the color returned to their cheeks as if a sunbeam had kissed them, and they clung to each other as if they were once more growing on the same stalk. "Mina, I will let you have him. You must be happy," said Lina. "No, Lina," said Mina, "he likes you most, and you are much better than I am." "No, Mina. I've quite made up my mind. Uncle Kurz is coming this afternoon, and I'll ask father and mother to let me go home with him, for I couldn't remain here and see it all just yet." "Do so, Lina, for then you'll be with his parents, and when you both come back, I'll ask Godfrey to get his father to look out for a situation for me as governess in some town far, far from home, for I couldn't stay here either." "Mina!" cried Lina, holding her sister from her at arm's length, and looking at her in amazement, "with *his* parents? With whose parents?" "Why — Rudolph's." "You meant Rudolph?" "Yes, why who did you mean?" "I? Oh, I meant Godfrey." "No, did you really?" exclaimed Mina, throwing her arms round Lina's neck, "but is it possible? How is it possible?

We don't mean the same after all then!" "Ah!" said Lina who was the most sensible of the two, "what a great deal of unnecessary pain we have given each other!" "Oh, how happy I am," cried Mina, who was the least sensible, as she danced about the room. "All will be well now." "Yes, Mina," said Lina the sensible, joining in the dance. "Everything will go on happily now." Then silly little Mina threw herself into her sister's arms again—she was so happy.

If people would only turn the handle of the door that divides them from their friends while there is yet time, all would go well with them, even though it might not bring such intense joy as it did to the two girls in the little garret-room.

The sisters cried one moment and laughed the next; then they danced round the room, and after that they sat on each other's knees, and told how it all happened, and sorrowed over their own stupidity, which had prevented them seeing the true state of the case. They wondered how it was that they had not had an explanation sooner, and then they confessed to each other exactly how matters stood between them and their cousins, and ended by being more than half angry with the two young men, whom they accused of being the real cause of the misunderstanding. Lina said that she had been in great doubt before, but that ever since last Sunday she had been quite certain that Mina cared for Godfrey because of her constant tears; and Mina said that she had been miserable because of the wicked trick Rudolph had played in church about the sermon, and that she had been puzzled to account for Lina's tears. Lina then explained that she had been so very sorry for poor Godfrey's disappointment. All was made up now between the sisters, and when the dinner-bell rang they ran down-stairs together arm in arm, looking as sweet and fresh as two roses. Bräsig, who had seated himself with his back to the light that he might see them better, was very much astonished when he caught sight of their happy faces. "What," he

said to himself, "these two girls changed and shy, and suffering from some secret grief? In love? Not a bit of it! They're as merry as crickets."

The sound of the dinner-bell brought Godfrey Baldrian, or the Methodist, as Bräsig called him. Lina blushed and turned away from him, not in anger, but because she remembered the confession she had just made in the garret. And Bräsig said to himself: "That's very odd now! Lina seems to have taken the infection, but how can she care for a scare-crow of a Methodist?" Bräsig expressed himself too strongly, but still it must be acknowledged that Godfrey was no beauty. Nature had not given him many personal advantages, and he did not use those that he had in the wisest possible way. For example his hair. He had a thick head of yellow hair that would have provoked no criticism, and indeed would have looked quite nice if it had only been cut properly, but unfortunately he had taken the pictures of the beloved disciple John as his model, and had parted his hair down the middle, and brushed it into ringlets at the ends, though the upper part of his head showed that the real nature of his hair was to be straight. I have nothing to say against little boys of ten or even twelve going about with curls, and the mothers of these same little boys would have still less objection to it than I should, for they delight in stroking the curls lovingly out of their children's faces, and in combing them out smooth when visitors come to the house. Some mothers have even gone so far, when their children's hair did not curl naturally, as to screw it up in paper or use tongs, but that was a mistake on their part. If it were the fashion, I should have nothing to say against even old people wearing curls, for it looks very nice in some ancient pictures, but there are two remarks I should like to make while on this subject, and these are: a man with thin legs ought never to wear tight trousers, and he whose hair does not curl naturally should cut it short. Our poor Godfrey's hair, which hung down his back, was burnt to a sort of dun color by the sun, and as he liked it to look

THE BRIDAL PAIR AT THE CIVIL MARRIAGE OFFICE

From the Painting by Benjamin Vautier

smooth and tidy, he put a good deal of pomade on it, which greased his coat-collar considerably. Beneath this wealth of hair was a small pale face with an expression of suffering on it, which always made Bräsig ask sympathizingly what shoemaker he employed, and whether he was troubled with corns. The rest of his figure was in keeping with his face. He was tall, narrow-chested, and angular, and that part of the human body which shows whether a man enjoys the good things of life, was altogether wanting in him. Indeed he was so hollowed out where the useful and necessary digesting apparatus is wont to show its existence by a gentle roundness of form, that he might be said to be shaped like the inside of Mrs. Nüssler's baking-trough. For this reason Bräsig regarded him as a sort of wonder in natural history, for he ate as much as a ploughman without producing any visible effect. Let no one imagine that the Methodist did not do his full duty in the way of eating and drinking; I have known divinity students, and know some now, with whom I should have no chance in that respect. But the fact is that young men whose minds are employed in theological studies are generally somewhat thin, as will be seen in any of the numerous divinity students to be met with in Mecklenburg; when they have been settled in a good living for a few years, they begin to fill out like ordinary mortals. Bräsig remembered this, and did not despair of seeing Godfrey a portly parson one of these days, though how it was to come about was rather a puzzle to him. Such was Godfrey Baldrian in appearance; but his portrait would not be complete if I did not add that he had the faintest possible tinge of Phariseeism in his expression. It was only a tinge, but with Phariseeism as with rennet, a very small quantity is enough to curdle a large pan of milk.

They sat down to dinner, and Joseph asked: "Where is Rudolph?" "Goodness gracious me, Joseph, what are you talking about!" said Mrs. Nüssler crossly. "I'm sure you might know by this time that Rudolph is always late. I dare say he's out fishing; but whatever he's about

I can assure him that if he doesn't come in in time for dinner, he may just go without." The meal was a very silent one, for Bräsig was too much occupied watching what was going on to be able to talk, and Mrs. Nüssler had enough to do wondering over the cause of the remarkable change in her daughters' appearance. The twins sat side by side, and looked as happy as if they had just awakened from a disagreeable dream, and were rejoicing that it was only a dream, and that the warm sunbeams were once more shining upon them.

When dinner was over, Mina whose turn it was to help her mother to clear away the dishes, tidy the room, and prepare the coffee, asked her sister: "Where are you going, Lina?" "I'll get my sewing and go to the arbor," answered Lina. "Very well," said Mina, "Ill join you there as soon as I'm ready." "And I'll go too," said Godfrey, "for I've got a book I want to finish." "That's right," said Bräsig; "it'll be a deuced good entertainment for Lina." Godfrey felt inclined to take the old man to task for using such a word as "deuced," but on second thoughts refrained from doing so, for he knew that it was hopeless to try to bring Bräsig round to his opinion, so he followed the girls from the room. "Bless me!" cried Mrs. Nüssler. "What can have happened to my girls? They were as quiet as mice and never said a word to each other till this afternoon, and now they are once more one heart and one soul." "Hush, Mrs. Nüssler," said Bräsig, "I'll find out all about it for you today. Joseph, come with me; but mind you're not to talk." Joseph followed him to the garden, and when they got there Bräsig took his arm: "Now hold your tongue, Joseph," he said, "don't look round, you must appear to be taking a walk after dinner." Joseph did as he was told with much success. When they reached the cherry-tree beside the arbor, Bräsig stood still and said: "Now then, Joseph, give me a back—but put your head close to the stem of the tree." Joseph was about to speak, but Bräsig pressed down his head, saying: "Hold your

tongue, Joseph — put your head nearer the tree." He then stepped on his back, and when standing there firmly, said: "Now straighten yourself — It does exactly!" Then seizing the lower branch with both hands, Bräsig pulled himself up into the tree. Joseph had never spoken all this time but now he ventured to remark: "But, Bräsig, they're not nearly ripe yet." "What a duffer you are, Joseph," said Bräsig, thrusting his red face through the green leaves which surrounded him. "Do you really think that I expect to eat Rhenish cherries at midsummer. But go away now as quickly as you can and don't stand there looking like a dog when a cat has taken refuge in a tree." "Ah well, what shall I do?" said Joseph, going away and leaving Bräsig to his fate.

Bräsig had not been long in his hiding-place, when he heard a light step on the gravel walk, and, peering down, saw Lina going into the arbor with such a large bundle of work in her arms that if she had finished it in one day it would have been difficult to keep her in sewing. She laid her work on the table and, resting her head on her hand, sat gazing thoughtfully at the blue sky beyond Bräsig's cherry-tree. "Ah, how happy I am," she said to herself in the fulness of her grateful heart. "How happy I am. Mina is so kind to me; and so is Godfrey, or why did he press my foot under the table at dinner. What made Bräsig stare at us so sharply, I wonder? I think I must have blushed. What a good man Godfrey is. How seriously and learnedly he can talk. How decided he is, and I think he has the marks of his spiritual calling written in his face. He isn't the least bit handsome it is true; Rudolph is much better looking, but then Godfrey has an air with him that seems to say, 'don't disturb me by telling me of any of your foolish worldly little vanities, for I have high thoughts and aspirations, I am going to be a clergyman.' I'll cut his hair short though as soon as I have the power." It is a great blessing that every girl does not set her heart on having a handsome husband, for otherwise we ugly men would all

have to remain bachelors; and pleasant looking objects we should be in that case, as I know of nothing uglier than an ugly old bachelor. Lina's last thought, that of cutting Godfrey's hair, had shown so much certainty of what was going to happen, that she blushed deeply, and as at the same moment she heard a slow dignified step approaching, she snatched up her work and began to sew busily.

Godfrey seated himself at a little distance from his cousin, opened his book and began to read, but every now and then he peeped over the edge of it, either because he had read it before, or because he was thinking of something else. That is always the way with Methodistical divinity students even when they firmly believe what they teach. *Before* the examination they think of nothing but their spiritual calling, but *after* the examination is well over human nature regains its sway, and they look out for a fitting wife, before they begin to think of a parsonage. Godfrey was like all the rest of his kind, and as no other girls except Mina and Lina had come in his way, and as Lina attended to his admonitions far more docilely than her sister, he determined to make her his helpmate. He was ignorant as to how such matters ought to be conducted, and felt a little shy and awkward. He had got no further in his wooing than pressing his lady-love's foot under the table, and whenever he had done so he was always much more confused than Lina, whose foot had received the pressure.

However he had determined that the whole matter should be settled that day, so he began: "I brought this book out entirely for your sake, Lina. Will you listen to a bit of it just now?" "Yes," said Lina. "What a slow affair it's going to be," thought Bräsig, who could hardly be said to be lying on a bed of roses, his position in the cherry-tree was so cramped and uncomfortable. Godfrey proceeded to read a sermon on Christian marriage, describing how it should be entered into, and what was the proper way of looking upon it. When he had finished he drew a little

nearer his cousin and asked: "What do you think of it, Lina?" "It's very nice," said Lina. "Do you mean marriage?" asked Godfrey. "O-oh, Godfrey," said Lina, her head drooping lower over her work. "No, Lina," Godfrey went on drawing a little closer to her, "it isn't at all nice. I am thankful to see that you don't regard the gravest step possible in human life with unbecoming levity. Marriage is a very hard thing, that is to say, in the Christian sense of the word." He then described the duties, cares and troubles of married life as if he wished to prepare Lina for taking up her abode in some penal settlement, and Bräsig, as he listened, congratulated himself on having escaped such a terrible fate. "Yes," Godfrey continued, "marriage is part of the curse that was laid on our first parents when they were thrust out of paradise." So saying he opened his Bible and read the third chapter of Genesis aloud. Poor Lina did not know what to do, or where to look, and Bräsig muttered: "The infamous Jesuit, to read all that to the child." He nearly jumped down from the tree in his rage, and as for Lina, she would have run away if it had not been the Bible her cousin was reading to her, so she hid her face in her hands and wept bitterly. Godfrey was now quite carried away by zeal for his holy calling; he put his arm round her waist, and said: "I could not spare you this at a time when I purpose making a solemn appeal to you. Caroline Nüssler, will you, knowing the gravity of the step you take, enter the holy estate of matrimony with me, and become my Christian helpmeet?" Lina was so frightened and distressed at his whole conduct that she could neither speak nor think; she could only cry.

At the same moment a merry song was heard at a little distance:

"One bright afternoon I stood to look
Into the depths of a silver brook,
And there I saw little fishes swim,
One of them was gray, I look'd at him.

He was swimming, swimming and swimming
And with delight seemed overbrimming;
I never saw such a thing in my life
As the little gray fish seeking a wife."

Lina struggled hard to regain her composure, and then, in spite of the Bible and the Christian requirements demanded of her, she started up and rushed out of the arbor. On her way to the house she passed Mina who was coming out to join her with her sewing. Godfrey followed Lina with long slow steps, and looked as much put out as the clergyman who was interrupted in a very long sermon by the beadle placing the church key on the reading desk and saying that he might lock up the church himself when he had done, for he, the beadle, must go home to dinner. Indeed he was in much the same position as that clergyman. Like him he had wished to preach a very fine sermon, and now he was left alone in his empty church.

Mina was an inexperienced little thing, for she was the youngest of the family, but still she was quick-witted enough to guess something of what had taken place. She asked herself whether she would cry if the same thing were to happen to her, and what it would be advisable for her to do under the circumstances. She seated herself quietly in the arbor, and began to unroll her work, sighing a little as she did so at the thought of the uncertainty of her own fate, and the impossibility of doing anything but wait patiently. "Bless me!" said Bräsig to himself as he lay hidden in the tree. "This little round-head has come now, and I've lost all feeling in my body. It's a horribly slow affair!" But the situation was soon to become more interesting, for shortly after Mina had taken her seat a handsome young man came round the corner of the arbor with a fishing rod over his shoulder and a fish basket on his back. "I'm so glad to find you here, Mina," he exclaimed, "of course you've all finished dinner." "You need hardly ask, Rudolph. It has just struck two." "Ah well," he said, "I suppose that my aunt is very angry with me again."

"You may be certain of that, and she was displeased with you already, you know, even without your being late for dinner. I'm afraid, however, that your own stomach will punish you more severely than my mother's anger could do, you've neglected it so much today." "All the better for you tonight. I really couldn't come sooner, the fish were biting so splendidly. I went to the black pool today, though Bräsig always advised me not to go there, and now I know why. It's his larder. When he can't catch anything elsewhere he's sure of a bite in the black pool. It's cram full of tench. Just look, did you ever see such beauties?" and he opened the lid of his basket as he spoke, and showed his spoil, adding: "I've done old Bräsig this time at any rate!" "The young rascal!" groaned Bräsig as he poked his nose through the cherry-leaves, making it appear like a huge pickled capsicum such as Mrs. Nüssler was in the habit of preserving in cherry-leaves for winter use. "The young rascal to go and catch my tench! Bless me! what monsters the rogue has caught!" "Give them to me, Rudolph," said Mina. "I will take them into the house, and will bring you something to eat out here." "Oh no, never mind." "But you musn't starve," she said. "Very well then — anything will do. A bit of bread and butter will be quite enough, Mina." The girl went away, and Rudolph seated himself in the arbor. "The devil take it!" muttered Bräsig, stretching his legs softly, and twisting and turning in the vain endeavor to find a part of his body which was not aching from his cramped position. "The wretch is sitting there now! I never saw such goings on!"

Rudolph sat buried in thought, a very unusual circumstance with him. He was easy-going by nature, and never troubled himself beforehand about vexations that might come to him. He was not in the habit of brooding over his worries, but on the contrary always tried to forget them. He was tall and strongly made, and his mischievous brown eyes had sometimes a look of imperious audacity which was in perfect keeping with the scar on his sunburnt cheek

that bore witness that he had not devoted his whole time and energy to the study of dogmatic theology. "Yes," he said to himself as he sat there waiting for his cousin, "I must get myself out of this difficulty! I could bear it as long as it was far off, for there was always plenty of time to come to a decision, but two things must be settled today beyond recall. My father is coming this afternoon. I only hope that my mother won't take it into her head to come too, or I should never have courage to do it. I'm as well suited to be a clergyman as a donkey is to play the guitar, or as Godfrey is to be colonel of a cavalry regiment. If Bräsig were only here, he'd stand by me I know. And then Mina—I wish it were all settled with her." At this moment Mina appeared carrying a plate of bread and butter—Rudolph sprang up, exclaiming: "What a dear good little girl you are, Mina!" and he threw his arm round her waist as he spoke. Mina freed herself from him, saying: "Don't do that. Ah, how could you have been so wicked? My mother is very angry with you." "You mean about the sermon," he answered; "well yes, it was a stupid trick." "No," said Mina quickly, "it was a wicked trick. You made game of holy things." "Not a bit of it," he replied. "These trial sermons are not holy things, even when they are preached by our pious cousin Godfrey." "But, Rudolph, it was in *church!*" "Ah, Mina, I confess that it was a silly joke. I didn't think sufficiently of what I was doing. I only thought of the sheepish look of amazement Godfrey's face would wear, and that tickled me so much that I was mad enough to play the trick. Now don't let us talk any more about it," Mina," he said coaxingly, as he slipped his arm round her waist again. "No, I won't allow that," said Mina. "And," she went on, "the parson said that if he were to make the story known, you'd never get a living all your life." "Then I hope that he'll tell every one what I did and it'll end all the bother." "What do you mean?" asked Mina, pushing him from her and staring at him in perplexity. "Are you in earnest?"

"Never more so in my life. I've entered the pulpit for the first and last time." "Rudolph!" cried Mina in astonishment. "What's the use of trying to make me a clergyman," said Rudolph quickly. "Look at Godfrey and then look at me. Do you think I should make a good parson? And then, there's another thing, even if I were so well up in theology that I could puzzle the learned professors themselves, they would never pass me in the examination. All that they care about is having men who can adopt all their cant phrases. If I were the apostle Paul himself they'd refuse to pass me, if they caught sight of this little scar upon my cheek." "What are you going to do then?" asked Mina anxiously, and laying her hand upon his arm, she added: "Oh, *don't* be a soldier!" "I should think not! No, I want to be a farmer." "The confounded young rascal!" muttered Bräsig. "Yes, my own dear little Mina," continued Rudolph, drawing her to his side on the bench, "I intend to be a farmer; a real good, hard-working farmer, and you, dear Mina, must help me to become one." "What!" said Bräsig to himself, "is she to teach him to plough and harrow?" "I, Rudolph?" asked Mina. "Yes, my sweet child," he answered, stroking her smooth hair and soft cheeks; then taking her chin in his hand, he raised her face toward him, and looking into her blue eyes, went on: "If I could only be certain that you'd consent to be my little wife as soon as I'd a home to offer you, it would make everything easy to me, and I should be sure of learning to be a good farmer. Will you, Mina, will you?" Mina began to cry softly, and Rudolph kissed away the tears as they rolled down her cheeks, and then she laid her little round-head on his shoulder. Rudolph gave her time to recover her composure, and after a few minutes she told him in a low whisper that she would do as he asked, so he kissed her again and again. Bräsig seeing this exclaimed half aloud: "The devil take him! Stop that!" Rudolph found time to tell her in the midst of his kissing that he intended to speak to his father that

afternoon, and said amongst other things that it was a pity Bräsig was not there, as he was sure he would have helped him to make his explanation to his father, who, he knew, thought a great deal of Bräsig's advice. "The young rascal to catch my fish!" muttered Bräsig. Then Mina said: "Bräsig was here this morning and dined with us. I daresay he is enjoying an after-dinner sleep now." "Just listen to little round-head," said Bräsig to himself. "An after-dinner sleep indeed! But everything is settled now, and I needn't cramp my bones up here any longer." And while Rudolph was saying that he would like to see the old man before he went into the house, Bräsig slipped out of his hiding-place in the cherry-tree, and clinging with both hands to the lowest branch, let his legs dangle in the air, and shouted: "Here he is!" Bump! He came down on the ground, and stood before the lovers with an expression on his red face which seemed to say that he considered himself a competent judge on even the most delicate points of feeling.

The two young people were not a little startled. Mina hid her face in her hands as Lina had done, but she did not cry; and she would have run away like Lina if she and uncle Bräsig had not always been on the most confidential terms with each other. She threw herself into uncle Bräsig's arms, and in her desire to hide her blushing face, she tried to burrow her little round-head into his waistcoat-pocket, exclaiming: "Uncle Bräsig, uncle Bräsig, you're a very naughty old man!" "Oh!" said Bräsig, "you think so, do you?" "Yes," answered Rudolph, who had mounted his high horse, "you ought to be ashamed of listening to what you were not intended to hear." "Moshoo Rudolph," said the old bailiff stiffly, "I may as well tell you once for all, that shame is a thing that must never be mentioned in connection with me, and if you think that your grand airs will have any effect upon me, you're very much mistaken." Rudolph saw clearly that such was the case, and as he did not want to quarrel with the old man for

Mina's sake, he relented a little, and said more gently that he would think nothing more of what had occurred, if Bräsig could assure him that he had got into the tree by accident, but still he considered that Bräsig ought to have coughed, or done something to make his presence known, instead of sitting still and listening to the whole story from A to Z. "Oh," said Bräsig, "I ought to have *coughed,* you say, but I *groaned* loud enough, I can tell you, and you couldn't have helped hearing me if you hadn't been so much taken up with what you yourself were about. But *you* ought to be ashamed of yourself for having fallen in love with Mina without Mrs. Nüssler's leave." Rudolph replied that that was his own affair, that no one had a right to meddle, and that Bräsig understood nothing about such things. "What!" said Bräsig. "Have you ever been engaged to three girls at once. I have, Sir, and quite openly too, and yet you say that I know nothing about such things! But sneaks are all alike. First of all you catch my fish secretly in the black pool, and then you catch little Mina in the arbor before my very eyes. No, no, let him be, Mina. He shall not hurt you." "Ah, uncle Bräsig!" entreated Mina, "do help us, we love each other so dearly." "Yes, let him be, Mina, you're my little godchild; you'll soon get over it." "No, Mr. Bräsig," cried Rudolph, laying his hand on the old man's shoulder, "no, dear good uncle Bräsig, we'll never get over it; it'll last as long as we live. I want to be a farmer, and if I have the hope before me of gaining Mina for my wife some day, and if," he added slyly, "you will help me with your advice, I can't help becoming a good one." "What a young rascal!" said Bräsig to himself, then aloud: "Ah yes, I know you! You'd be a latin farmer like Pistorius, and Prætorius, and Trebonius. You'd sit on the edge of a ditch and read the book written by the fellow with the long string of titles of honor, I mean the book about oxygen, nitrogen, and organisms, whilst the farm-boys spread the manure over your rye-field in lumps as big as your hat. Oh, I know you!

I've only known one man who took to farming after going through all the classes at the high-school, who turned out well. I mean young Mr. von Rambow, Hawermann's pupil." "Oh, uncle Bräsig," said Mina, raising her head slowly and stroking the old man's cheek, "Rudolph can do as well as Frank." "No, Mina, he *can't*. And shall I tell you why? Because he's only a gray-hound, while the other is a *man*." "Uncle Bräsig," said Rudolph, "I suppose you are referring to that silly trick that I played about the sermon, but you don't know how Godfrey plagued me in his zeal for converting me. I really couldn't resist playing him a trick." "Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Bräsig. "No, I didn't mean that, I was very much amused at that. So he wanted to convert you, and perhaps induce you to give up fishing? He tried his hand at converting again this afternoon, but Lina ran away from him; however that doesn't matter, it's all right." "With Lina and Godfrey?" asked Mina anxiously. "And did you hear all that passed on that occasion too?" "Of course I did. It was for her sake entirely that I hid myself in that confounded cherry-tree. But now come here, Moshoo Rudolph. Do you promise never to enter a pulpit again, or to preach another sermon?" "Never again." "Do you promise to get up at three o'clock in the morning in summer, and give out the feeds for the horses?" "Punctually." "Do you promise to learn how to plough, harrow, mow and bind properly? I mean to bind with a wisp, there's no art in doing it with a rope." "Yes," said Rudolph. "Do you promise when coming home from market never to sit in an inn over a punch-bowl while your carts go on before, so that you are obliged to reel after them?" "I promise never to do so," said Rudolph. "Do you promise — Mina, do you see that pretty flower over there, the blue one I mean, will you bring it to me, I want to smell it — do you promise," he repeated as soon as Mina was out of hearing, "never to flirt with any of those confounded farm-girls?" "Oh, Mr. Bräsig, do you take me for a scoundrel?" asked

Rudolph, turning away angrily. "No, no," answered Bräsig, "but I want you to understand clearly from the very beginning that I will strangle you if ever you cause my little godchild to shed a tear." And as he spoke he looked so determined, that one might have thought he was going to begin the operation at once. "Thank you, Mina," he said, taking the flower from her, and after smelling it putting it in his button-hole. "And now come here, Mina, and I will give you my blessing. Nay, you needn't go down on your knees, for I'm not one of your parents, I'm only your godfather. And, Moshoo Rudolph, I promise to take your part this afternoon when your father comes, and to help you to free yourself from being bound to a profession you don't like. Come away both of you, we must go in now. But, Rudolph, remember you musn't sit on the grass and read, but must see to the proper manuring of your fields yourself. Look, this is the way the farm-lads ought to hold their pitch-forks, not like that. Bang! and tumble off all that is on it; no, they must shake the fork gently three or four times, breaking and spreading the manure as they do so. When a bit of ground is properly spread it ought to look as smooth and clean as a velvet table-cover." He then went into the house accompanied by the two young people.

[The love affairs of both young couples ran smoothly, since uncle Bräsig was on their side. Godfrey and Lina were married first and, when pastor Behrens died, moved into the parsonage of Gürlitz, for Godfrey was elected the dear old man's successor. Rudolph studied agriculture and, when he had mastered his subject, returned to Rexow, where he was intrusted with the management of the farm, and married Mina. No finer wedding had ever been celebrated in the neighborhood. All the rich relatives of Joseph Nüssler were present, in addition to the more intimate friends. There was also a horde of young people whom uncle Bräsig had been permitted to invite from Rahnstaedt, where he had been living since his retirement on a pension.

Mina looked for all the world like a rosy apple lying on a silver plate surrounded by its green leaves as she stood there in her white satin gown and myrtle wreaths. Uncle Bräsig was groomsman, and blew his nose energetically as he said: "My little Mina! My little godchild! How happy she looks!" and every time one of the fat old Nüssler's gave Mina a kiss, he bent down and kissed Mrs. Behrens, as much as to imply that he thought this would prevent any contamination of his goddaughter by the foolish old Nüsslers with their wretched worldly notions. But finally, when Bräsig was about to salute her again, she said: "You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Bräsig." Then Bräsig drew back rather crestfallen and said: "Don't take it ill of me, Mrs. Behrens, my feelings ran away with me."

Those kindly feelings often ran away with him and enabled him to bring happiness to his friends where more cautious people would have been helpless. It was he who unraveled the mystery which had cast a shadow over the good name of Hawermann, and who at the proper moment called Frank von Rambow home from Paris. When Hawermann had received the news that he was cleared, and Mrs. Behrens wished to go to him at once, uncle Bräsig drew her gently back to the sofa and said: "Not quite yet, Mrs. Behrens. You see, I think that Hawermann wants to have a little quiet time to tell God all about it, and that Louisa is helping him. It's enough for her to be there, for as you know our God is a jealous God, and doesn't suffer people to meddle, when he is speaking to a soul that is filled with gratitude to Him." Little Mrs. Behrens gazed at him in speechless amazement. At last she murmured: "Oh, Bräsig, I've always looked upon you as a heathen, and now I see that you're a Christian." "I know nothing about that, Mrs. Behrens. I'm sure of this, however, that what little I've been able to do in this matter has been done as an assessor and not as a Christian." Uncle Bräsig, you must know, had recently been appointed an assessor to the

Rahnstaedt court, and he was as proud of his new title as he had been of that of " farm-bailiff " before.

As the years advanced, his friends prospered, while Pomuchelskopp, whom the Gürlitz laborers had badly treated in the revolution of 1848, sold his estates and moved away. Uncle Bräsig went about visting his friends, and on one such visit had an attack of gout that would have been of little consequence, but which seized both legs and then mounted into his stomach, because of a chill he got on his journey home. And that caused his death. Mrs. Behrens, Mrs. Nüssler, and his old friend Charles Hawermann came round his bed. He held Mrs. Nüssler's hand tight all the while. Suddenly he raised himself and said: " Mrs. Nüssler, please put your hand on my head; I have always loved you. Charles Hawermann, will you rub my legs, they're so cold." Hawermann did as he was asked, and Bräsig said, very slowly with one of his old smiles: " In style I was always better than you." That was all.]

ADALBERT STIFTER

ROCK CRYSTAL* (1846)

TRANSLATED BY LEE M. HOLLANDER, PH.D.

AMONG the high mountains of our fatherland there lies a little village with a small but very pointed church-tower which emerges with red shingles from the green of many fruit-trees, and by reason of its red color is to be seen far and away amid the misty bluish distances of the mountains. The village lies right in the centre of a rather broad valley which has about the shape of a longish circle. Besides the church it contains a school, a townhall, and several other houses of no mean appearance, which form a square on which stand four linden-trees surrounding a stone cross. These buildings are not mere farms but house within them those handicrafts which are indispensable to the human race and furnish the mountaineers with all the products of industry which they require. In the valley and along the mountain-sides many other huts and cots are scattered, as is very often the case in mountain regions. These habitations belong to the parish and school-district and pay tribute to the artisans we mentioned by purchasing their wares. Still other more distant huts belong to the village, but are so deeply ensconced in the recesses of the mountains that one cannot see them at all from the valley. Those who live in them rarely come down to their fellow-parishioners and in winter frequently must keep their dead until after the snows have melted away in order to give them a burial. The greatest personage whom the villagers get to see in the course of the year is the priest.

* From *Bunte Steine.*

DAFFINGER

ADALBERT STIFTER

They greatly honor him, and usually he himself through a longer sojourn becomes so accustomed to the solitude of the valley that he not unwillingly stays and simply lives on there. At least, it has not happened in the memory of man that the priest of the village had been a man hankering to get away or unworthy of his vocation.

No roads lead through the valley. People use their double-track cart-paths upon which they bring in the products of their fields in carts drawn by one horse. Hence, few people come into the valley, among them sometimes a solitary pedestrian who is a lover of nature and dwells for some little time in the upper room of the inn and admires the mountains; or perhaps a painter who sketches the small, pointed spire of the church and the beautiful summits of the rocky peaks. For this reason the villagers form a world by themselves. They all know each other by name and their several histories down from the time of grandfather and great-grandfather; they all mourn when one of them dies; know what name the new-born will receive; they have a language differing from that of the plains; they have their quarrels, which they settle among themselves; they assist one another and flock together when something extraordinary has happened.

They are conservative and things are left to remain as they were. Whenever a stone drops out of a wall, the same stone is put back again, the new houses are built like the old ones, the dilapidated roofs are repaired with the same kind of shingles, and if there happen to be brindled cows on a farm, calves of the same color are raised always, so that the color stays on the farm.

To the south of the village one sees a snow-mountain which seems to lift up its shining peaks right above the roofs of the houses. Yet it is not quite so near. Summer and winter it dominates the valley with its beetling crags and snowy sides. Being the most remarkable object in the landscape, this mountain is of main interest to the inhabitants and has become the central feature of many a story.

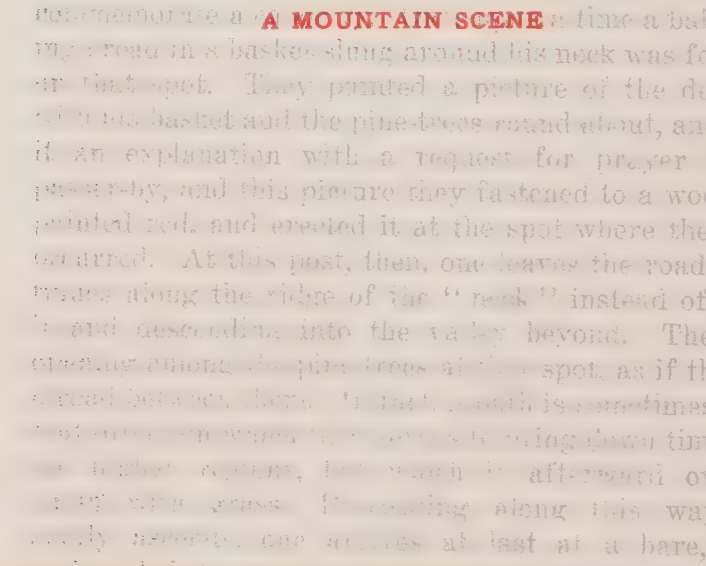
There is not a young man or graybeard in the village but can tell of the crags and crests of the mountain, of its crevasses and caves, of its torrents and screes, whether now he knows it from his own experience or from hearsay. The mountain is the boast of the villagers as if it were a work of theirs and one is not so sure, however high one may esteem the plain-spokenness and reputation for truth-telling of the natives, whether they do not fib, now and then, to the honor and glory of their mountain. Besides being the wonder of the valley, the mountain affords actual profit; for whenever a company of tourists arrives to ascend the mountain the natives serve as guides; and to have been a guide, to have experienced this or that, to know this or that spot, is a distinction every one likes to gain for himself. The mountain often is the object of their conversation at the inn, when they sit together and tell of their feats and wonderful experiences; nor do they omit to relate what this or that traveler had said and what reward they had received from him for their labor. Furthermore, the snowy sides of the mountain feed a lake among its heavily forested recesses, from which a merry brook runs through the valley, drives the saw-mill and the flour-mill, cleanses the village and waters the cattle. The forests of the mountain furnish timber and form a bulwark against the avalanches.

The annual history of the mountain is as follows: In winter, the two pinnacles of its summit, which they call horns, are snow-white and, when visible on bright days, tower up into the blackish blue of the sky in dazzling splendor, and all its shoulders are white, too, and all slopes. Even the perpendicular precipices, called walls by the natives, are covered with white frost delicately laid on, or with thin ice adhering to them like varnish, so that the whole mass looms up like an enchanted castle from out of the hoary gray of the forests which lie spread out heavily about its base. In summer, when the sun and warm winds melt the snow from their steep sides, the peaks soar up black into the sky and have only beautiful veins and specks

of white on their flanks — as the natives say. But the fact is, the peaks are of a delicate, distant blue, and what they call veins and specks is not white, but has the lovely milk-blue color of distant snow against the darker blue of the rocks. When the weather is hot, the more elevated slopes about the peaks do not lose their covering of eternal snow. On the contrary it then gleams with double resplendence down upon the green of the trees in the valley; but the winter's snow is melted off their lower parts. Then becomes visible the bluish or greenish iridescence of the glaciers which are bared and gleam down upon the valley below. At the edge of this iridescence, there where it seems from the distance like a fringe of gems, a nearer view reveals confused masses of wild and monstrous boulders, slabs, and fragments piled up in chaotic fashion. In very hot and long summers, the ice-fields are denuded even in the higher regions, and then a much greater amount of blue-green glacier-ice glances down into the valley, many knobs and depressions are laid bare which one otherwise sees only covered with white, the muddy edge of the ice comes to view with its deposit of rocks, silt, and slime, and far greater volumes of water than usual rush into the valley. This continues until it gradually becomes autumn again, the waters grow less, and one day a gray continuous gentle rain spreads over all the valley. Then, after the mists have dispersed about the summits, the mountain is seen to have draped itself again in its soft robe of snow, and all crags, cones, and pinnacles are vested in white. Thus it goes on, year after year, with but slight divergences, and thus it will go on so long as nature remains the same, and there is snow upon the heights and people live in the valleys. But to the natives these changes seem great, they pay much attention to them and calculate the progress of the seasons by them.

The ascent of the mountain is made from our valley. One follows a fine road which leads south to another valley over a so-called "neck." Neck they call a moderately high

mountain-ridge which connects two mountain-ranges of considerable magnitude and over which one can pass from one valley to another between the mountains. The neck which connects our snow-mountain with another great mountain-mass is altogether covered with pine-forests. At its greatest elevation, where the road begins gradually to descend into the valley beyond, there stands a post erected to commemorate a calamity. Once upon a time a baker carrying bread in a basket slung around his neck was found dead on that spot. They painted a picture of the dead baker with his basket and the pine-trees round about, and beneath it an explanation with a request for prayer from the passer-by, and this picture they fastened to a wooden post painted red, and erected it at the spot where the accident occurred. At this post, then, one leaves the road and continues along the ridge of the "neck" instead of crossing it and descending into the valley beyond. There is an opening among the pine-trees at that spot, as if there were a road between them. In fact, a path is sometimes made in that direction which then serves to bring down timber from the higher regions, but which is afterward overgrown again with grass. Proceeding along this way, which gently ascends, one arrives at last at a bare, treeless region. It is barren heath where grows nothing but heather, mosses, and lichens. It grows ever steeper, the further one ascends; but one always follows a gully resembling a rounded out ditch which is convenient, as one cannot then miss one's way in this extensive, treeless, monotonous region. After a while, rocks as large as churches rise out of the grassy soil, between whose walls one climbs up still farther. Then there are again bleak ridges, with hardly any vegetation, which reach up into the thinner air of higher altitudes and lead straight to the ice. At both sides of this path, steep ledges plunge down, and by this natural causeway the snow-mountain is joined to the "neck." In order to surmount the ice one skirts it for some distance where it is surrounded by rock-walls, until one comes to



A MOUNTAIN SCENE

From the Painting by H. Reifferscheid

the old hard snow which bridges the crevasses and at most seasons of the year bears the weight of the climber. From the highest point of this snowfield, two peaks tower up, of which the one is higher and, therefore, the summit of the mountain. These pinnacles are very hard to climb. As they are surrounded by a chasm of varying width — the bergschrund — which one must leap over, and as their precipitous escarpments afford but small footholds, most of the tourists climbing the mountain content themselves with reaching the bergschrund and from there enjoy the panorama. Those who mean to climb to the top must use climbing-irons, ropes, and iron spikes.

Besides this mountain there are still others south of the valley, but none as high. Even if the snow begins to lie on them early in fall and stays till late in spring, midsummer always removes it, and then the rocks gleam pleasantly in the sunlight, and the forests at their base have their soft green intersected by the broad blue shadows of these peaks which are so beautiful that one never tires of looking at them.

On the opposite, northern, eastern, and western sides of the valley the mountains rise in long ridges and are of lower elevation: scattered fields and meadows climb up along their sides till rather high up, and above them one sees clearings, chalets, and the like, until at their edge they are silhouetted against the sky with their delicately serrated forest — which is indicative of their inconsiderable height — whereas the mountains toward the south, though also magnificently wooded, cut off the shining horizon with entirely smooth lines.

When one stands about in the centre of the valley it would seem as if there were no way out or into the basin; but people who have often been in the mountains are familiar with this illusion: the fact is, diverse roads lead through the folds of the mountains to the plains to the north, some of them with hardly a rise; and to the south where the valley seems shut in by precipitous mountain-walls, a road leads over the "neck" mentioned above.

The village is called Gschaid and the snow-mountain looking down upon it, Gars.

On the other side of the "neck" there lies a valley by far more beautiful and fertile than that of Gschaid. At its entrance there lies a country-town of considerable size named Millsdorf which has several industrial enterprizes and carries on almost urban trade and business. Its inhabitants are much more well-to-do than those of Gschaid and, although only three hours away, which for these labor-loving mountaineers used to great distances is only a bagatelle, yet manners and customs are so different in the two valleys and even their external appearance is so unlike that one might suppose a great number of miles lay between. This is of common occurrence in the mountains and due not only to the more or less favored position of the valleys but also to the spirit of the natives who by reason of their differing occupations are inclined this way or that. But in this they all agree, that they adhere to established customs and the usages of their forefathers, lightly bear the absence of great traffic, cling to their native valley with an extraordinary love; in fact, can hardly live out of it.

Months, ay a whole year may pass without a native of Gschaid setting foot into the valley beyond and visiting the town of Millsdorf. The same is true of the people of Millsdorf, although they have more intercourse with the country beyond and hence live in less seclusion than the villagers of Gschaid. A road which might be called a high-road leads through the length of their valley and many a traveler passes through it without suspecting in the least that to the north of him, on the other side of the snow-mountain towering high above him, there is another valley with many scattered houses and the village with its pointed church-tower.

Among the trades of the village which supply the necessities of the valley is that of the shoemaker, indispensible indeed to man excepting in his most primitive condition.

But the natives are so high raised above that condition that they stand in need of very good and durable footgear for the mountains. The shoemaker is the only one of his trade in the valley — with one inconsiderable exception. His house stands on the public square of Gschaid where most of the larger dwellings are situated and its gray walls, white window-frames, and green shutters face the four linden-trees. On the ground-floor are the workshop, the workmen's room, a larger and a smaller sitting-room, the shop, and then the kitchen and pantry; the first story or, more properly, the attic-space, contains the "upper-room" which is also the "best room." In it there stand two beds of state, beautifully polished clothes-presses; there is a china-closet with dishes, a table with inlaid work, upholstered easy-chairs, a strong-box for the savings. Furthermore there hang on the walls pictures of saints, two handsome watches, being prizes won in shooting-matches, and finally there are some rifles both for target-firing and hunting, with all the necessary paraphernalia, carefully hung up in a special case with a glass-door.

Added to the shoemaker's house there is a smaller house, built exactly like it and, though separated from it by an arched gateway, belonging to it like part of a whole. It has only one large room with some closets. Its purpose is to serve the owner of the larger house as habitation for the remainder of his days, after having left the property to his son or successor; there to dwell with his wife until both are dead and the little house stands empty again and is ready for another occupant. To the rear of the shoemaker's house are stable and barn; for every dweller in the valley carries on farming along with his regular occupation and makes a good living from it. Behind these buildings, finally, is the garden which is lacking to none of the better houses of Gschaid, and from which the villagers obtain their vegetables, their fruit, and the flowers necessary for festive occasions. And, as quite commonly in the mountains, apiculture is pursued also in the gardens of Gschaid

The small exception alluded to, and the only competitor of the shoemaker is a man of the same trade, old Tobias, who is not a real rival, though, because he only cobbles and is kept quite busy with that. Nor would he ever think of competing with the gentleman shoemaker of the township, especially as the latter frequently provides him gratuitously with leather-cuttings, sole strips, and the like. In summertime, old Tobias sits under a clump of elder-bushes at the end of the village and works away. All about him are shoes and lace-boots, all of them, however, gray, muddy, and torn. There are no high boots because these are not worn in the village and its surroundings; only two personages own such boots, the priest and the schoolteacher, both of whom have their new work and repairing done by the shoemaker. In winter, old Tobias sits in his cot behind the elder-bushes and has it comfortably warm, because wood is not dear in Gschaid.

Before entering into possession of his house, the shoemaker had been a chamois-poacher — in fact, had not exactly been a model in youth, so the people of Gschaid said. In school, he had always been one of the brightest scholars. Afterwards, he had learned his father's trade and had gone on his journeyman wanderings, finally returning to the village. Instead of wearing a black hat, as befits a tradesman, and as his father had done all his life, he put on a green one, decorated it with all the feathers obtainable and strutted around in the very shortest homespun coat to be found in all the valley; whereas his father always had worn a coat of dark, even black cloth with very long tails to indicate his station as tradesman. The young shoemaker was to be seen on all dancing floors and bowling alleys. Whenever any one gave him a piece of good advice he merely whistled. He attended all shooting-matches in the neighborhood with his target-rifle and often brought back a prize, which he considered a great victory. The prize generally consisted of coins artistically set. To win them, he frequently had to spend more coins of the same value than the

prize was worth — especially as he was very generous with his money. He also participated in all the chases of the surrounding country and won a name as a marksman. Sometimes, however, he issued alone with his double-barreled gun and climbing irons, and once, it is said, returned with an ugly wound in his head.

In Millsdorf there lived a dyer who carried on a very notable industry. His works lay right at the entrance of the town at the side toward Gschaid. He employed many people and even worked with machines, which was an unheard of thing in the valley. Besides, he did extensive farming. The shoemaker frequently crossed the mountain to win the daughter of this wealthy dyer. Because of her beauty, but also because of her modesty and domesticity she was praised far and near. Nevertheless the shoemaker, it is said, attracted her attention. The dyer did not permit him to enter his house; and whereas his beautiful daughter had, even before that, never attended public places and merry-makings, and was rarely to be seen outside the house of her parents, now she became even more retiring in her habits and was to be seen only in church, in her garden, or at home.

Some time after the death of his parents, by which the paternal house which he inhabited all alone became his, the shoemaker became an altogether different man. Boisterous as he had been before, he now sat in his shop and hammered away day and night. Boastingly, he set a prize on it that there was no one who could make better shoes and footgear. He took none but the best workmen and kept after them when they worked in order that they should do as he told them. And really, he accomplished his desire, so that not only the whole village of Gschaid, which for the most part had got its shoes from neighboring valleys, had their work done by him, but the whole valley also. And finally he had some customers even from Millsdorf and other valleys. Even down into the plains his fame spread so that a good many who intended to climb in the mountains had their shoes made by him for that purpose.

He ordered his house very neatly and in his shop the shoes, lace-boots, and high boots shone upon their several shelves; and when, on Sundays, the whole population of the valley came into the village, gathering under the four linden trees of the square, people liked to go over to the shoemaker's shop and look through the panes to watch the customers.

On account of the love he bore to the mountains, even now he devoted his best endeavor to the making of mountain lace-shoes. In the inn he used to say that there was no one who could show him any one else's mountain boots that could compare with his own. "They don't know," he was accustomed to add, "and they have never learned it in all their life, how such a shoe is to be made so that the firmament of the nails shall fit well on the soles and contain the proper amount of iron, so as to render the shoe hard on the outside, so that no flint, however sharp, can be felt through, and so that it on its inside fits the foot as snug and soft as a glove."

The shoemaker had a large ledger made for himself in which he entered all goods he had manufactured, adding the names of those who had furnished the materials and of those who had bought the finished goods, together with a brief remark about the quality of the product. Footgear of the same kind bore their continuous numbers, and the book lay in the large drawer of his shop.

Even if the beautiful daughter of the Millsdorf dyer did not take a step outside her parents' home, and even though she visited neither friends nor relatives, yet the shoemaker of Gschaid knew how to arrange it so that she saw him from afar when she walked to church, when she was in her garden, and when she looked out upon the meadows from the windows of her room. On account of this unceasing spying the dyer's wife by dint of her long and persevering prayers had brought it about that her obstinate husband yielded and that the shoemaker — as he had, in fact, become a better man — led the beautiful and wealthy Millsdorf girl

home to Gschaid as his wife. However, the dyer was a man who meant to have his own way. The right sort of man, he said, ought to ply his trade in a manner to prosper and ought, therefore, to be able to maintain his wife, children, himself, and his servants, to keep house and home in good condition, and yet save a goodly amount — which savings were, after all, the main aids to honor and dignity in the world. Therefore, he said, his daughter would receive nothing from home but an excellent outfit; all else it was and remained the duty of the husband to provide. The dyeing works in Millsdorf and the farming he carried on were a dignified and honorable business by themselves which had to exist for their own sake. All property belonging to them had to serve as capital, for which reason he would not give away any part of them. But when he, the dyer, and his wife, were deceased, then both the dyeworks and the farm in Millsdorf would fall to their only daughter, the shoemaker's wife in Gschaid, and she and her husband could do with the property what they pleased: they would inherit it, however, only if worthy of inheriting it; if unworthy, it would go to their children, and if there were none, to other relatives, with the exception of the lawful portion. Neither did the shoemaker demand anything, but proudly gave the dyer to understand that he had cared but for his beautiful daughter and that he was able to maintain her as she had been maintained at home. And when she was his wife, he gave her clothes not only finer than those the women of Gschaid and the Gschaid valley owned, but also than she had ever worn at home. And as to food and drink, he insisted on having it better, and her treatment more considerate than she had enjoyed in her own father's house. Moreover, in order to show his independence of his father-in-law, he bought more and more ground with his savings so that he came to own a goodly property.

Now, the natives of Gschaid rarely leave their valley, as has been remarked — hardly even traveling to Millsdorf

from which they are separated by customs as well as by mountain-ridges; besides, it never happens that a man leaves his valley to settle in a neighboring one — though settlements at greater distances do take place; neither does a woman or a girl like to emigrate from one valley into another, except in the rather rare cases when she follows her love and as wife joins her husband in another valley. So it happened that the dyer's daughter from Millsdorf was ever considered a stranger by all the people of Gschaid, even after she had become the shoemaker's wife; and although they never did her any ill, ay, even loved her on account of her beautiful ways, yet they always seemed to keep their distance, or, if you will, showed marked consideration for her, and never became intimate or treated her as their equal, as men and women of Gschaid did men and women of their own valley. Thus matters stood and remained, and were not mended by the better dress and the lighter domestic duties of the shoemaker's wife.

At the end of the first year, she had born to her husband a son, and several years afterward, a daughter. She believed, however, that he did not love his children as she thought he ought to, and as she knew she loved them herself; for his face was mostly serious and he was chiefly concerned with his work. He rarely fondled or played with the children and always spoke seriously to them as one does to adults. With regard to food and clothes, and other material things, his care for them was above reproach.

At first, the dyer's wife frequently came over to Gschaid, and the young couple in their turn visited Millsdorf on occasion of country-fairs and other festivities. But when the children came, circumstances were altered. If mothers love their children and long for them, this is frequently, and to a much higher degree, the case with grandmothers; they occasionally long for their grandchildren with an intensity that borders on morbidness. The dyer's wife very frequently came over to Gschaid now, in order to see the children and to bring them presents. Then she would depart

again after giving them kindly advice. But when her age and health did not any longer permit of these frequent journeys and the dyer for this reason objected to them, they bethought themselves of another plan; they changed about, and now the children visited their grandmother. Frequently, the mother herself took them over in their carriage; at other times, they were bundled up warmly and driven over the "neck" under the care of a servant girl. But when they were a little older, they went to Millsdorf on foot, either in the company of their mother or of some servant; indeed, when the boy had become strong, clever, and self-reliant, they let him travel the well-known road over the "neck" by himself; and, when the weather was specially beautiful and he begged them, they permitted his little sister to accompany him. This is customary in Gschaid as the people are hardy pedestrians, and because parents — especially a man like the shoemaker — like to see their children able to take care of themselves.

Thus it happened that the two children made the way over the pass more frequently than all the other villagers together; and inasmuch as their mother had always been treated as half a stranger in Gschaid, the children, by this circumstance, grew up to be strangers' children to the village folks; they hardly were Gschaid children, but belonged half to Millsdorf.

The boy, Conrad, had already something of the earnest ways of his father, and the girl, Susanna, named so after her mother, or Sanna for brevity, had great faith in his knowledge, understanding, and strength, and unquestioningly followed where he led, just as her mother absolutely trusted her husband whom she credited with all possible insight and ability.

On beautiful mornings, one could see the children walk southward through the valley, and traverse the meadows toward the point where the forest of the "neck" looks down on them. They would enter the forest, gain the height on the road, and before noon come to the open meadows on

the side toward Millsdorf. Conrad then showed Sanna the pastures that belonged to grandfather, then they walked through his fields in which he explained to her the various kinds of grain, then they saw the long cloths wave in the wind and blow into antic shapes as they hung to dry on poles under the eaves; then they heard the noises of the fullery and of the tannery which the dyer had built by the brook, then they rounded a corner of the fields, and very soon entered the garden of the dyer's establishment by the back gate, where they were received by grandmother. She always had a presentiment when the children were coming, looked out of the windows, and recognized them from afar, whenever Sanna's red kerchief shone brightly in the sun.

She led the children through the laundry and the press into the living-room and had them sit down, not letting them take off their neckcloths or coats lest they should catch cold, and then kept them for dinner. After the meal they were allowed to go into the open and play, and to walk about in the house of their grandparents, or do whatever else they cared to, provided it was not improper or forbidden. The dyer, who always ate with them, questioned them about school and impressed upon them what they ought to learn. In the afternoon, they were urged by their grandmother to depart even before it was time, so that they should in no case reach home too late. Although the dyer had given his daughter no dowry and had vowed not to give away anything of his fortune before his death, his wife did not hold herself so strictly bound. She not only frequently made the children presents of pieces of money, sometimes of considerable value, but also invariably tied two bundles for them to carry in which there were things she believed were necessary or would give the children pleasure. And even if the same things were to be found in the shoemaker's house and as good as one might wish, yet grandmother made presents of them in her joy of giving, and the children carried them home as something especially fine. Thus it happened that the children on the day before Christmas un-

wittingly carried home the presents — well sealed and packed in paste-board boxes — which were intended for them as their Christmas presents the very same night.

Grandmother's pressing the children to go before it was time, so that they should not get home late, had only the effect that they tarried on the way, now here, now there. They liked to sit by the hazelwoods on the "neck" and open nuts with stones; or, if there were no nuts, they played with leaves or pegs or the soft brown cones that drop from the branches of fir-trees in the beginning of spring. Sometimes, Conrad told his little sister stories or, when arrived at the red memorial post, would lead her a short distance up the side-road and tell her that here one could get on the Snow-Mountain, that up there were great rocks and stones, that the chamois gamboled and great birds circled about up there. He often led her out beyond the forest, when they would look at the dry grass and the small bushes of the heather; but then he returned with her, invariably bringing her home before twilight, which always earned him praise.

One winter, on the morning before Christmas, when the first dawn had passed into day, a thin dry veil was spread over the whole sky so that one could see the low and distant sun only as an indistinct red spot; moreover, the air that day was mild, almost genial, and absolute calm reigned in the entire valley as well as in the heavens, as was indicated by the unchanging and immobile forms of the clouds. So the shoemaker's wife said to her children: "As today is pleasant and it has not rained for a long time and the roads are hard, and as father gave you permission yesterday, if the weather continued fine, you may go to visit grandmother in Millsdorf; but ask father once more."

The children, who were still standing there in their little nightgowns, ran into the adjoining room where their father was speaking with a customer and asked him again for his permission, because it was such a fine day. It was given and they ran back to their mother.

The shoemaker's wife now dressed the children carefully, or rather, she dressed the little girl in snug-fitting warm

dresses; for the boy began to dress himself and was finished long before his mother had the little girl straightened out. When they were both ready she said: "Now, Conrad, be nice and careful. As I let your little sister go with you, you must leave betimes and not remain standing anywhere, and when you have eaten at grandmother's you must return at once and come home; for the days are very short now and the sun sets very soon."

"Yes, I know, mother," said Conrad.

"And take good care of Sanna that she does not fall or get over-heated."

"Yes, mother."

"Well, then, God bless you, now go to father and tell him you are leaving."

The boy slung a bag of calfskin, artfully sewed by his father, about his shoulders by a strap and the children went into the adjoining room to say farewell to their father. Soon they issued again and merrily skipped along the village street, after their mother had once more made the sign of the cross over them.

Quickly they passed over the square and along the rows of houses, and finally between the railings of the orchards out into the open. The sun already stood above the wooded heights that were woven through with milky wisps of cloud, and its dim reddish disk proceeded along with them through the leafless branches of the crab-apple trees.

There was no snow in the whole valley, but the higher mountains that had been glistening with it for many weeks already were thoroughly covered. The lower ridges, however, remained snowless and silent in the mantle of their pine forests and the fallow red of their bare branches. The ground was not frozen yet and would have been entirely dry, after the long dry period that had been prevailing, if the cold of the season had not covered it with a film of moisture. This did not render the ground slippery, however, but rather firm and resilient so that the children made good progress. The scanty grass still standing on the meadows

and especially along the ditches in them bore the colors of autumn. There was no frost on the ground and a closer inspection did not reveal any dew, either, which signifies rain, according to the country people.

Toward the edge of the meadows there was a mountain brook over which led a high, narrow wooden bridge. The children walked over it and looked down. There was hardly any water in the brook, only a thin streak of intensely blue color wound through the dry white pebbles of its stony bed, and both the small amount and the color of the water indicated that cold was prevailing in the greater altitudes; for this rendered the soil on the mountains dry so that it did not make the water of the brook turbid and hardened the ice so that it could give off but a few clear drops

From the bridge, the children passed through the valleys in the hills and came closer and closer to the woods.

Finally they reached the edge of the woods and walked on through them.

When they had climbed up into the higher woodlands of the "neck," the long furrows of the road were no longer soft, as had been the case in the valley, but were firm, not from dryness, but, as the children soon perceived, because they were frozen over. In some places, the frost had rendered them so hard that they could bear the weight of their bodies. From now on, they did not persist any longer in the slippery path beside the road, but in the ruts, as children will, trying whether this or that furrow would carry them. When, after an hour's time, they had arrived at the height of the " neck," the ground was so hard that their steps resounded on it and the clods were hard like stones.

Arrived at the location of the memorial post, Sanna was the first to notice that it stood no longer there. They went up to the spot and saw that the round, red-painted post which carried the picture was lying in the dry grass which stood there like thin straw and concealed the fallen post from view. They could not understand, to be sure, why it had toppled over — whether it had been knocked down or

fallen of itself; but they did see that the wood was much decayed at the place where it emerged from the ground and that the post might therefore easily have fallen of itself. Since it was lying there, however, they were pleased that they could get a closer look at the picture and the inscription than they had ever had before. When they had examined all — the basket with the rolls, the whitish hands of the baker, his closed eyes, his gray coat and the pine-trees surrounding him — and when they had spelt out and read aloud the inscription, they proceeded on their way.

After another hour, the dark forest on either side receded, scattered trees, some of them isolated oaks, others birches, and clumps of bushes, received them and accompanied them onward, and after a short while the children were running down through the meadows of the valley of Millsdorf.

Although this valley is not as high, by far, as the valley of Gschaid and so much warmer that they could begin harvesting two weeks earlier than in Gschaid, the ground was frozen here too; and when the children had come to the tannery and the fulling-mill of their grandfather, pretty little cakes of ice were lying on the road where it was frequently spattered by drops from the wheels. That is usually a great pleasure for children.

Grandmother had seen them coming and had gone to meet them. She took Sanna by her cold little hands and led her into the room.

She made them take off their heavy outer garments, ordered more wood to be put in the stove, and asked them what had happened on the way over.

When they had told her she said: "That's nice and good, and I am very glad that you have come again; but today you must be off early, the day is short and it is growing colder. Only this morning there was no frost in Millsdorf."

"Not in Gschaid, either," said the boy.

"There you see. On that account you must hurry so that you will not grow too cold in the evening," said grandmother.

Then she asked how mother was and how father was, and whether anything particular had happened in Gschaid.

After having questioned them she devoted herself to the preparation of dinner, made sure that it would be ready at an earlier time than usual, and herself prepared tidbits for the children which she knew would give them pleasure. Then the master dyer was called. Covers were set on the table for the children as for grown-up people and then they ate with grandfather and grandmother, and the latter helped them to particularly good things. After the meal, she stroked Sanna's cheeks which had grown quite red, meanwhile.

Thereupon she went busily to and fro packing the boy's knapsack till it was full and, besides, stuffed all kinds of things into his pockets. Also in Sanna's little pockets she put all manner of things. She gave each a piece of bread to eat on the way and in the knapsack, she said, there were two more pieces of wheat bread, in case they should grow too hungry.

"For mother, I have given you some well-roasted coffee," she said, "and in the little bottle that is stoppered and tightly wrapped up there is also some black coffee, better than mother usually makes over at your house. Just let her taste it; it is a veritable medicine tonic, so strong that one swallow of it will warm up the stomach, so that the body will not grow cold on the coldest of winter days. The other things in the pasteboard-box and those that are wrapped up in paper in the knapsack you are to bring home without touching."

After having talked with the children a little while longer she bade them go.

"Take good care, Sanna," she said, "that you don't get chilled, you mustn't get overheated. And don't you run up along the meadows and under the trees. Probably there will be some wind toward evening, and then you must walk more slowly. Greet father and mother and wish them a right merry Christmas."

Grandmother kissed both children on their cheeks and pushed them through the door. Nevertheless she herself went along, accompanied them through the garden, let them out by the back gate, closed it behind them, and went back into the house.

The children walked past the cakes of ice beside grandfather's mill, passed through the fields of Millsdorf, and turned upward toward the meadows.

When they were passing along the heights where, as has been said, stood scattered trees and clumps of bushes there fell, quite slowly, some few snow-flakes.

"Do you see, Sanna," said the boy, "I had thought right away that we would have snow; do you remember, when we left home, how the sun was a bloody red like the lamp hanging at the Holy Sepulchre; and now nothing is to be seen of it any more, and only the gray mist is above the tree-tops. That always means snow."

The children walked on more gladly and Sanna was happy whenever she caught a falling flake on the dark sleeves of her coat and the flake stayed there a long time before melting. When they had finally arrived at the outermost edge of the Millsdorf heights where the road enters the dark pines of the "neck" the solid front of the forest was already prettily sprinkled by the flakes falling ever more thickly. They now entered the dense forest which extended over the longest part of the journey still ahead of them.

From the edge of the forest the ground continues to rise up to the point where one reaches the red memorial post, when the road leads downward toward the valley of Gschaid. In fact, the slope of the forest from the Millsdorf side is so steep that the road does not gain the height by a straight line but climbs up in long serpentines from west to east and from east to west. The whole length of the road up to the post and down to the meadows of Gschaid leads through tall, dense woods without a clearing which grow less heavy as one comes down on the level again and

issues from them near the meadows of the valley of Gschaid. Indeed, the "neck," though being only a small ridge connecting two great mountain masses, is yet large enough to appear a considerable mountain itself if it were placed in the plain.

The first observation the children made when entering the woods was that the frozen ground appeared gray as though powdered with flour, and that the beards of the dry grass-stalks standing here and there between the trees by the road-side were weighted down with snow-flakes; while on the many green twigs of the pines and firs opening up like hands there sat little white flames.

"Is it snowing at home, too, I wonder?" asked Sanna.

"Of course," answered the boy, "and it is growing colder, too, and you will see that the whole pond is frozen over by tomorrow."

"Yes, Conrad," said the girl.

She hastened her steps to keep up with the boy striding along.

They now continued steadily up along the serpentines, now from west to east and again from east to west. The wind predicted by grandmother did not come; on the contrary, the air was so still that not a branch or twig was moving. In fact, it seemed warmer in the forest, as, in general, loose bodies with air-spaces between, such as a forest, are in winter. The snow-flakes descended ever more copiously so that the ground was altogether white already and the woods began to appear dappled with gray, while snow lay on the garments of the children.

Both were overjoyed. They stepped upon the soft down, and looked for places where there was a thicker layer of it, in order to tread on them and make it appear as if they were wading in it already. They did not shake off the snow from their clothes.

A great stillness had set in. There was nothing to be seen of any bird although some do flit to and fro through the forest in winter-time and the children on their way to

Millsdorf had even heard some twitter. The whole forest seemed deserted.

As theirs were the only tracks and the snow in front of them was untrod and immaculate they understood that they were the only ones crossing the "neck" that day.

They proceeded onward, now approaching, now leaving the trees. Where there was dense undergrowth they could see the snow lying upon it.

Their joy was still growing, for the flakes descended ever more densely, and after a short time they needed no longer to search for places to wade in the snow, for it was so thick already that they felt it soft under their soles and up around their shoes. And when all was so silent and peaceful it seemed to them that they could hear the swish of the snow falling upon the needles.

"Shall we see the post today?" asked the girl, "because it has fallen down, you know, and then the snow will fall on it and the red color will be white."

"We shall be able to see it though, for that matter," replied the boy; "even if the snow falls upon it and it becomes white all over we are bound to see it, because it is a thick post, and because it has the black iron cross on its top which will surely stick out."

"Yes, Conrad."

Meanwhile, as they had proceeded still farther, the snowfall had become so dense that they could see only the very nearest trees.

No hardness of the road, not to mention its ruts, was to be felt, the road was everywhere equally soft with snow and was, in fact, recognizable only as an even white band running on through the forest. On all the branches there lay already the beautiful white covering.

The children now walked in the middle of the road, furrowing the snow with their little feet and proceeding more slowly as the walking became more tiresome. The boy pulled up his jacket about his throat so that no snow should fall in his neck, and pulled down his hat so as to be more

protected. He also fastened his little sister's neckerchief which her mother had given her to wear over her shoulders, pulling it forward over her forehead so that it formed a roof.

The wind predicted by grandmother still had not come, on the other hand, the snowfall gradually became so dense that not even the nearest trees were to be recognized, but stood there like misty sacks.

The children went on. They drew up their shoulders and walked on.

Sanna took hold of the strap by which Conrad had his calfskin bag fastened about his shoulders and thus they proceeded on their way.

They still had not reached the post. The boy was not sure about the time, because the sun was not shining and all was a monotonous gray.

"Shall we reach the post soon?" asked the girl.

"I don't know," said the boy, "I can't see the trees today and recognize the way, because it is so white. We shall not see the post at all, perhaps, because there is so much snow that it will be covered up and scarcely a blade of grass or an arm of the black cross will show. But never mind. We just continue on our road, and the road goes between the trees and when it gets to the spot where the post stands it will go down, and we shall keep on it, and when it comes out of the trees we are already on the meadows of Gschaid, then comes the path, and then we shall not be far from home."

"Yes, Conrad," said the girl.

They proceeded along their road which still led upward.

The footprints they left behind them did not remain visible long, for the extraordinary volume of the descending snow soon covered them up. The snow no longer rustled, in falling upon the needles, but hurriedly and peacefully added itself to the snow already there. The children gathered their garments still more tightly about them, in order to keep the steadily falling snow from coming in on all sides.

They walked on very fast, and still the road led upward.

After a long time they still had not reached the height on which the post was supposed to be, and from where the road was to descend toward Gschaid.

Finally the children came to a region where there were no more trees.

"I see no more trees," said Sanna.

"Perhaps the road is so broad that we cannot see them on account of the snow," answered the boy.

"Yes, Conrad," said the girl.

After a while the boy remained standing and said: "I don't see any trees now myself, we must have got out of the woods, and also the road keeps on rising. Let us stand still a while and look about, perhaps we may see something."

But they perceived nothing. They saw the sky only through a dim space. Just as in a hailstorm gloomy fringes hang down over the white or greenish swollen clouds, thus it was here, and the noiseless falling continued. On the ground they saw only a round spot of white and nothing else.

"Do you know, Sanna," said the boy, "we are on the dry grass I often led you up to in summer, where we used to sit and look at the pasture-land that leads up gradually and where the beautiful herbs grow. We shall now at once go down there on the right."

"Yes, Conrad."

"The day is short, as grandmother said, and as you well know yourself, and so we must hurry."

"Yes, Conrad," said the girl.

"Wait a little and I will fix you a little better," replied the boy.

He took off his hat, put it on Sanna's head and fastened it with both ribbons under her chin. The kerchief she had worn protected her too little, while on his head there was such a mass of dense curls that the snow could fall on it for a long time before the wet and cold would penetrate. Then he took off his little fur-jacket and drew it over her

They walked on very fast, and still the road led upward, on which the post was supposed to be, and from where the road was to descend toward Gothaid.

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"I see no more trees," said Hanna.

"Perhaps the road is so broad that we cannot see them; don't see any trees now myself, we must have got out of the woods, and also the road keeps on rising. Let us stand

LEAVETAKING OF THE BRIDAL PAIR

But they perceived nothing. They saw the sky only hung down over the white or grey, swollen clouds, th it was here, and the [illegible] ground they saw only a [illegible] sign.

[illegible] dry grass [illegible] and look at the pastor [illegible] wood where the beautiful herbs grow. We shall now go down there on the right."

"Yes, Conrad."

From the Painting by Benjamin Vautier

"The boy is smart, as [illegible] know yourself, and so we must hurry."

"Yes, Conrad," said the girl.

"Wait a little and I will fix you a little better," replied the boy.

He took off his hat, put it on Hanna's head and fastened it with both ribbons under her chin. The kerchief she had worn protected her [illegible] on his head there was such a mass of dense curls that the snow could not melt for a long time before the wet and cold would penetrate. Then he took off his little fur-jacket and drew it over her

little arms. About his own shoulders and arms which now showed the bare shirt he tied the little kerchief Sanna had worn over her chest and the larger one she had had over her shoulders. That was enough for himself, he thought, and if he only stepped briskly he should not be cold.

He took the little girl by her hand, so they marched on.

The girl with her docile little eyes looked out into the monotonous gray round about and gladly followed him, only her little hurrying feet could not keep up with his, for he was striding onward like one who wanted to decide a matter once for all.

Thus they proceeded with the unremitting energy children and animals have as they do not realize how far their strength will carry them, and when their supply of it will give out.

But as they went on they did not notice whether they were going down or up. They had turned down to the right at once, but they came again to places that led up. Often they encountered steep places which they were forced to avoid, and a trench in which they continued led them about in a curve. They climbed heights which grew ever steeper as they proceeded, and what they thought led downward was level ground, or it was a depression, or the way went on in an even stretch.

"Where are we, I wonder, Conrad?" asked the girl.

"I don't know," he answered. "If I only could see something with my eyes," he continued, "that I could take my direction from."

But there was nothing about them but the blinding white, white everywhere which drew an ever narrowing circle about them, passing, beyond it, into a luminous mist descending in bands which consumed and concealed all objects beyond, until there was nothing but the unceasingly descending snow.

"Wait, Sanna," said the boy, "let us stand still for a moment and listen, perhaps we might hear a sound from the valley, a dog, or a bell, or the mill, or a shout, some-

thing we must hear, and then we shall know which way to go."

So they remained standing, but they heard nothing. They remained standing a little longer, but nothing came, not a single sound, not the faintest noise beside their own breath, aye, in the absolute stillness they thought they could hear the snow as it fell on their eyelashes. The prediction of grandmother had still not come true; no wind had arisen, in fact, what is rare in those regions, not a breath of air was stirring.

After having waited for a long time they went on again.

"Never mind, Sanna," said the boy, "don't be afraid, just follow me and I shall lead you down yet.—If only it would stop snowing!"

The little girl was not faint-hearted, but lifted her little feet as well as she could and followed him. He led her on in the white, bright, living, opaque space.

After a time they saw rocks. Darkling and indistinct they loomed up out of the white opaque light. As the children approached they almost bumped against them. They rose up like walls and were quite perpendicular so that scarcely a flake of snow could settle on them.

"Sanna, Sanna," he said, "there are the rocks, just let us keep on, let us keep on."

They went on, had to enter in between the rocks and push on at their base. The rocks would let them escape neither to left nor right and led them on in a narrow path. After a while the children lost sight of them. They got away from the rocks as unexpectedly as they had got among them. Again, nothing surrounded them but white, no more dark forms interposed. They moved in what seemed a great brightness and yet could not see three feet ahead, everything being, as it were, enveloped in a white darkness, and as there were no shadows no opinion about the size of objects was possible. The children did not know whether they were to descend or ascend until some steep slope compelled their feet to climb.

"My eyes smart," said Sanna.

"Don't look on the snow," answered the boy, "but into the clouds. Mine have hurt a long time already; but it does not matter, because I must watch our way. But don't be afraid, I shall lead you safely down to Gschaid."

"Yes, Conrad."

They went on; but wheresoever they turned, whichever way they turned, there never showed a chance to descend. On either side steep acclivities hemmed them in, and also made them constantly ascend. Whenever they turned downward the slopes proved so precipitous that they were compelled to retreat. Frequently they met obstacles and often had to avoid steep slopes.

They began to notice that whenever their feet sank in through the new snow they no longer felt the rocky soil underneath but something else which seemed like older, frozen snow; but still they pushed onward and marched fast and perseveringly. Whenever they made a halt everything was still, unspeakably still. When they resumed their march they heard the shuffling of their feet and nothing else; for the veils of heaven descended without a sound, and so abundantly that one might have seen the snow grow. The children themselves were covered with it so that they did not contrast with the general whiteness and would have lost each other from sight had they been separated but a few feet.

A comfort it was that the snow was as dry as sand so that it did not adhere to their boots and stockings or cling and wet them.

At last they approached some other objects. They were gigantic fragments lying in wild confusion and covered with snow sifting everywhere into the chasms between them. The children almost touched them before seeing them. They went up to them to examine what they were.

It was ice — nothing but ice.

There were snow-covered slabs on whose lateral edges the smooth green ice became visible; there were hillocks

that looked like heaped-up foam, but whose inward-looking crevices had a dull sheen and lustre as if bars and beams of gems had been flung pellmell. There rose rounded hummocks that were entirely enveloped in snow, slabs and other forms that stood inclined or in a perpendicular position, towering as high as houses or the church of Gschaid. In some, cavities were hollowed out through which one could insert an arm, a head, a body, a whole big wagon full of hay. All these were jumbled together and tilted so that they frequently formed roofs or eaves whose edges the snow overlaid and over which it reached down like long white paws. Nay, even a monstrous black boulder as large as a house lay stranded among the blocks of ice and stood on end so that no snow could stick to its sides. And even larger ones which one saw only later were fast in the ice and skirted the glacier like a wall of debris.

"There must have been very much water here, because there is so much ice," remarked Sanna.

"No, that did not come from any water," replied her brother, "that is the ice of the mountain which is always on it, because that is the way things are."

"Yes, Conrad," said Sanna.

"We have come to the ice now," said the boy; "we are on the mountain, you know, Sanna, that one sees so white in the sunshine from our garden. Now keep in mind what I shall tell you. Do you remember how often we used to sit in the garden, in the afternoon, how beautiful it was, how the bees hummed about us, how the linden-trees smelled sweet, and how the sun shone down on us?"

"Yes, Conrad, I remember."

"And then we also used to see the mountain. We saw how blue it was, as blue as the sky, we saw the snow that is up there even when we had summer-weather, when it was hot and the grain ripened."

"Yes, Conrad."

"And below it where the snow stopped one sees all sorts of colors if one looks close — green, blue, and whitish — that

is the ice; but it only looks so small from below, because it is so very far away. Father said the ice will not go away before the end of the world. And then I also often saw that there was blue color below the ice and thought it was stones, or soil and pasture-land, and then come the woods, and they go down farther and farther, and there are some boulders in them too, and then come meadows that are already green, and then the green leafy-woods, and then our meadow-lands and fields in the valley of Gschaid. Do you see now, Sanna, as we are at the ice we shall go down over the blue color, and through the forests in which are the boulders, and then over the pasture-land, and through the green leafy-forests, and then we shall be in the valley of Gschaid and easily find our way to the village."

"Yes, Conrad," said the girl.

The children now entered upon the glacier where it was accessible. They were like wee little pricks wandering among the huge masses.

As they were peering in under the overhanging slabs, moved as it were by an instinct to seek some shelter, they arrived at a trench, broad and deeply furrowed, which came right out of the ice. It looked like the bed of some torrent now dried up and everywhere covered with fresh snow. At the spot where it emerged from the ice there yawned a vault of ice beautifully arched above it. The children continued in the trench and, entering the vault, went in farther and farther. It was quite dry and there was smooth ice under their feet. All the cavern, however, was blue, bluer than anything else in the world, more profoundly and more beautifully blue than the sky, as blue as azure glass through which a bright glow is diffused. There were more or less heavy flutings, icicles hung down pointed and tufted, and the passage led inward still farther, they knew not how far; but they did not go on. It would also have been pleasant to stay in this grotto, it was warm and no snow could come in; but it was so fearfully blue that the children took fright and

ran out again. They went on a while in the trench and then clambered over its side.

They passed along the ice, as far as it was possible to edge through that chaos of fragments and boulders.

"We shall now have to pass over this, and then we shall run down away from the ice," said Conrad.

"Yes," said Sanna and clung to him.

From the ice they took a direction downward over the snow which was to lead them into the valley. But they were not to get far. Another river of ice traversed the soft snow like a gigantic wall bulging up and towering aloft and, as it were, reaching out with its arms to the right and the left. It was covered by snow on top, but at its sides there were gleams of blue and green and drab and black, aye, even of yellow and red. They could now see to larger distances, as the enormous and unceasing snowfall had abated somewhat and was only as heavy as on ordinary snowy days. With the audacity of ignorance they clambered up on the ice in order to cross the interposing tongue of the glacier and to descend farther behind it. They thrust their little bodies into every opening, they put their feet on every projection covered by a white snow-hood, whether ice or rock, they aided their progress with their hands, they crept where they could not walk, and with their light bodies worked themselves up until they had finally gained the top of the wall.

They had intended to climb down its other side.

There was no other side.

As far as the eyes of the children reached there was only ice. Hummocks, slabs, and spires of ice rose about them, all covered with snow. Instead of being a wall which one might surmount and which would be followed by an expanse of snow, as they had thought, new walls of ice lifted up out of the glacier, shattered and fissured and variegated with innumerable blue sinuous lines; and behind them were other walls of the same nature, and behind them others again, until the falling snow veiled the distance with its gray.

"Sanna, we cannot make our way here," said the boy.

"No," answered his sister.

"Then we will turn back and try to get down somewhere else."

"Yes, Conrad."

The children now tried to climb down from the ice-wall where they had clambered up, but they did not succeed. There was ice all about them, as if they had mistaken the direction from which they had come. They turned hither and thither and were not able to extricate themselves from the ice. It was as if they were entangled in it. At last, when the boy followed the direction they had, as he thought, come, they reached more scattered boulders, but they were also larger and more awe-inspiring, as is usually the case at the edge of the glacier. Creeping and clambering, the children managed to issue from the ice. At the rim of the glacier there were enormous boulders, piled in huge heaps, such as the children had never yet seen. Many were covered all over with snow, others showed their slanting under-sides which were very smooth and finely polished as if they had been shoved along on them, many were inclined toward one another like huts and roofs, many lay upon one another like mighty clods. Not far from where the children stood, several boulders were inclined together, and over them lay broad slabs like a roof. The little house they thus formed was open in front, but protected in the rear and on both sides. The interior was dry, as not a single snow-flake had drifted in. The children were very glad that they were no longer in the ice, but stood on the ground again.

But meanwhile it had been growing dark.

"Sanna," said the boy, "we shall not be able to go down today, because it has become night, and because we might fall or even drop into some pit. We will go in under those stones where it is so dry and warm, and there we will wait. The sun will soon rise again, and then we shall run down from the mountain. Don't cry, please, don't cry, and I shall give you all the things to eat which grandmother has given us to take along."

The little girl did not weep. After they had entered under the stone roof where they could not only sit comfortably, but also stand and walk about she seated herself close to him and kept very quiet.

"Mother will not be angry," said Conrad, "we shall tell her of the heavy snow that has kept us, and she will say nothing; father will not, either. And if we grow cold, why then we must slap our hands to our bodies as the woodcutters did, and then we shall grow warm again."

"Yes, Conrad," said the girl.

Sanna was not at all so inconsolable because they could not run down the mountain and get home as he might have thought; for the immense exertion, of whose severity the children hardly had any conception, made the very sitting down seem sweet to them, unspeakably sweet, and they did not resist.

But now hunger asserted itself imperiously. Almost at the same time, both took their pieces of bread from their pockets and began to eat. They ate also the other things, such as little pieces of cake, almonds, raisins, and other trifles, which grandmother had put into their pockets.

"Sanna, now we must clean the snow from our clothes," said the boy, "so that we shall not become wet."

"Yes, Conrad," replied Sanna.

The children went before their little house. Conrad first brushed off his little sister. He grasped the corners of her coat and shook them, took off the hat he had put on her head, emptied it of snow and wiped off the snow that remained in it. Then he rid himself as best he could of the snow that lay on him.

At that time it had entirely stopped snowing. The children could not feel one flake descending.

They returned into their stone-hut and sat down. Getting up had showed them how tired they really were, and they were glad to sit down again. Conrad laid down the calfskin bag which he had strapped on his shoulders. He took out the cloth in which grandmother had wrapped a

pasteboard-box and several paper packages and put it about his shoulders for greater warmth. He also took the two pieces of wheat-bread out of his wallet and gave Sanna both. The child ate them most eagerly. A part of them, however, she gave back to Conrad as she saw he was not eating anything. He accepted it and ate it.

From that time on, the children merely sat and looked.

As far as the eye could reach in the twilight there was nothing but snow, whose minute crystals began to scintillate in a strange manner as if they had absorbed the light of day and were emitting it again now.

Night fell with the rapidity usual in high altitudes. Soon it was dark all about, only the snow continued to glimmer faintly. Not only had it stopped snowing but the clouds began to grow thin and to part, for the children saw the gleam of a star. As the snow really emitted light, as it were, and the clouds no longer hung down from the sky, they could see from their cave how the snowy hillocks round about were sharply outlined against the dark sky. The cave was warmer than it had been at any other place during the day, and so the children rested, clinging closely to each other and even forgot to be afraid of the darkness. Soon the stars multiplied, they gleamed forth now here, now there, until it seemed that there was not a single cloud left in the whole sky.

This was the moment when people in the valleys are accustomed to light their candles. At first, only one is kindled, in order to make light in the room; or, possibly, only a pine-splinter; or the fire is burning in the hearth, and all windows of human habitations grow bright and shed lustre into the snowy night; but all the more tonight, Christmas evening, when many more lights were kindled, in order to shine full upon the presents for the children which lay upon the tables or hung on the trees — innumerable candles were lit; for in nearly every house, every cot, every room, there were children for whom the Christ-child had brought presents which had to be shown by the light of candles.

The boy had thought one could very quickly come down from the mountain and yet, not a single one of the lights burning that night in the valley shone up to them. They saw nothing but the pale snow and the dark sky, all else was rendered invisible by the distance. At this hour, the children in all valleys were receiving their Christmas presents. These two alone sat up there by the edge of the glacier and the finest presents meant for them on this day lay in little sealed packages in the calfskin bag in the rear of the cave.

The snow-clouds had sunk below the mountains on all sides and a vault entirely dark-blue, almost black, full of densely clustered burning stars extended above the children; and through the midst of them was woven a shimmering broad milky band which they had, indeed, seen also below in the valley, but never so distinctly. The night was advancing. The children did not know that the stars change their position and move toward the west, else they might have recognized the hour of night by their progress. New stars came and the old ones disappeared, but they believed them to be always the same. It grew somewhat brighter about the children by the radiance of the stars; but they saw no valley, no known places, but everywhere white — only white. Only some dark peak, some dark knob became visible looming up out of the shimmering waste. The moon was nowhere to be seen in the heavens, perhaps it had set early with the sun, or it had not yet risen.

After a long time the boy said: "Sanna, you must not sleep; for do you remember what father said, that if one sleeps in the mountains one will freeze to death, as the old hunter slept and sat four months dead on that stone and no one had known where he was."

"No, I shall not sleep," said the little girl feebly.

Conrad had shaken her by a corner of her coat, in order to make her listen to his words.

Then there was silence again.

After a little while, the boy felt a soft pressure against his arm which became ever heavier. Sanna had fallen asleep and had sunk over toward him.

"Sanna, don't sleep, please, don't sleep!" he said.

"No," she mumbled drowsily, "I shall not sleep."

He moved farther away from her, in order to make her move; she toppled over and would have continued sleeping on the ground. He took hold of her shoulder and shook her. As he moved a little more, he noticed that he was feeling cold himself and that his arm had grown numb. He was frightened and jumped up. He seized his sister, shook her more vigorously and said, "Sanna, get up a little, we want to stand up a little so that we shall feel better."

"I am not cold, Conrad," she answered.

"Yes indeed you are, Sanna, get up," he cried.

"My fur-jacket is warm," she said.

"I shall help you up," he said.

"No," she replied, and lay still.

Then something else occurred to the boy. Grandmother had said: "Just one little mouthful of it will warm the stomach so that one's body will not be cold on the coldest winter day."

He reached for his little calfskin knapsack, opened it, and groped around in it until he found the little flask into which grandmother had put the black coffee for mother. He took away the wrappings from the bottle and with some exertion uncorked it. Then he bent down to Sanna and said: "Here is the coffee that grandmother sends mother, taste a little of it, it will make you feel warm. Mother would give it to us if she knew what we needed it for."

The little girl, who was by nature inclined to be passive, answered, "I am not cold."

"Just take a little," urged the boy, "and then you may go to sleep again."

This expectation tempted Sanna and she mastered herself so far that she took a swallow of the liquor. Then the boy drank a little, too.

The exceedingly strong extract took effect at once and all the more powerfully as the children had never in their life tasted coffee. Instead of going to sleep, Sanna became more active and acknowledged that she was cold, but that she felt nice and warm inside, and that the warmth was already passing into her hands and feet. The children even spoke a while together.

In this fashion they drank ever more of the liquor in spite of its bitter taste as the effect of it began to die away and roused their nerves to a fever heat which was able to counteract their utter weariness.

It had become midnight, meanwhile. As they still were so young, and because on every Christmas eve in the excess of their joy they went to bed very late and only after being overcome by sleep, they never had heard the midnight tolling, and never the organ of the church when holy mass was being celebrated, although they lived close by. At this moment of the Holy Night, all bells were being rung, the bells of Millsdorf were ringing, the bells of Gschaid were ringing, and behind the mountain there was still another church whose three bells were pealing brightly. In the distant lands outside the valley there were innumerable churches and bells, and all of them were ringing at this moment, from village to village the wave of sound traveled, from one village to another one could hear the peal through the bare branches of the trees; but up to the children there came not a sound, nothing was heard here, for nothing was to be announced here. In the winding valleys, the lights of lanterns gleamed along the mountain-slopes, and from many a farm came the sound of the farm bell to rouse the hands. But far less could all this be seen and heard up here. Only the stars gleamed and calmly twinkled and shone.

Even though Conrad kept before his mind the fate of the huntsman who was frozen to death, and even though the children had almost emptied the bottle of black coffee — which necessarily would bring on a corresponding relaxa-

tion afterwards, they would not have been able to conquer their desire for sleep, whose seductive sweetness outweighs all arguments against it, had not nature itself in all its grandeur assisted them and in its own depths awakened a force which was able to cope with sleep.

In the enormous stillness that reigned about them, a silence in which no snow-crystal seemed to move, the children heard three times the bursting of the ice. That which seems the most rigid of all things and yet is most flexible and alive, the glacier, had produced these sounds. Thrice they heard behind them a crash, terrific as if the earth were rent asunder,— a sound that ramified through the ice in all directions and seemed to penetrate all its veins. The children remained sitting open-eyed and looked out upon the stars.

Their eyes also were kept busy. As the children sat there, a pale light began to blossom forth on the sky before them among the stars and extended a flat arc through them. It had a greenish tinge which gradually worked downward. But the arc became ever brighter until the stars paled in it. It sent a luminosity also into other regions of the heavens which shed greenish beams softly and actively among the stars. Then, sheaves of vari-colored light stood in burning radiance on the height of the arc like the spikes of a crown. Mildly it flowed through the neighboring regions of the heavens, it flashed and showered softly, and in gentle vibrations extended through vast spaces. Whether now the electric matter of the atmosphere had become so tense by the unexampled fall of snow that it resulted in this silent, splendid efflorescence of light, or whether some other cause of unfathomable nature may be assigned as reason for the phenomenon — however that be: gradually the light grew weaker and weaker, first the sheaves died down, until by unnoticeable degrees it grew ever less and there was nothing in the heavens but the thousands upon thousands of simple stars.

The children never exchanged a word, but remained sitting and gazed open-eyed into the heavens.

Nothing particular happened afterward. The stars gleamed and shone and twinkled, only an occasional shooting star traversed them.

At last, after the stars had shone alone for a long time, and nothing had been seen of the moon, something else happened. The sky began to grow brighter, slowly but recognizably brighter; its color became visible, the faintest stars disappeared and the others were not clustered so densely any longer. Finally, also the bigger stars faded away, and the snow on the heights became more distinct. Now, one region of the heavens grew yellow and a strip of cloud floating in it was inflamed to a glowing line. All things became clearly visible and the remote snow-hills assumed sharp outlines.

"Sanna, day is breaking," said the boy.

"Yes, Conrad," answered the girl.

"After it grows just a bit brighter we shall go out of the cave and run down from the mountain."

It grew brighter, no star was visible any longer, and all things stood out clear in the dawn.

"Well, then, let us go," said the boy.

"Yes, let us go," answered Sanna.

The children arose and tried their limbs which only now felt their tiredness. Although they had not slept, the morning had reinvigorated them. The boy slung the calfskin bag around his shoulder and fastened Sanna's fur-jacket about her. Then he led her out of the cave.

As they had believed it would be an easy matter to run down from the mountain they had not thought of eating and had not searched the bag, to see whether it contained any wheat-bread or other eatables.

The sky being clear, Conrad had wanted to look down from the mountain into the valleys in order to recognize the valley of Gschaid and descend to it. But he saw no valleys whatever. He seemed not to stand on any mountain from which one can look down, but in some strange, curious country in which there were only unknown objects. Today

they saw awful rocks stand up out of the snow at some distance which they had not seen the day before; they saw the glacier, they saw hummocks and slanting snow-fields, and behind these, either the sky or the blue peak of some very distant mountain above the edge of the snowy horizon.

At this moment the sun arose.

A gigantic, bloody red disk emerged above the white horizon and immediately the snow about the children blushed as if it had been strewn with millions of roses. The knobs and pinnacles of the mountain cast very long and greenish shadows along the snow.

"Sanna, we shall go on here, until we come to the edge of the mountain and can look down," said the boy.

They went farther into the snow. In the clear night, it had become still drier and easily yielded to their steps. They waded stoutly on. Their limbs became even more elastic and strong as they proceeded, but they came to no edge and could not look down. Snowfield succeeded snowfield, and at the end of each always shone the sky.

They continued nevertheless.

Before they knew it, they were on the glacier again. They did not know how the ice had got there, but they felt the ground smooth underfoot, and although there were not such awful boulders as in the moraine where they had passed the night, yet they were aware of the glacier being underneath them, they saw the blocks growing ever larger and coming ever nearer, forcing them to clamber again.

Yet they kept on in the same direction.

Again they were clambering up some boulders; again they stood on the glacier. Only today, in the bright sunlight, could they see what it was like. It was enormously large, and beyond it, again, black rocks soared aloft. Wave heaved behind wave, as it were, the snowy ice was crushed, raised up, swollen as if it pressed onward and were flowing toward the children. In the white of it they perceived innumerable advancing wavy blue lines. Between those regions where the icy masses rose up, as if shattered against

each other, there were lines like paths, and these were strips of firm ice or places where the blocks of ice had not been screwed up very much. The children followed these paths as they intended to cross part of the glacier, at least, in order to get to the edge of the mountain and at last have a glimpse down. They said not a word. The girl followed in the footsteps of the boy. The place where they had meant to cross grew ever broader, it seemed. Giving up their direction, they began to retreat. Where they could not walk they broke with their hands through the masses of snow which often gave way before their eyes, revealing the intense blue of a crevasse where all had been pure white before. But they did not mind this and labored on until they again emerged from the ice somewhere.

"Sanna," said the boy, "we shall not go into the ice again at all, because we cannot make our way in it. And because we cannot look down into our valley, anyway, we want to go down from the mountain in a straight line. We must come into some valley, and there we shall tell people that we are from Gschaid and they will show us the way home."

"Yes, Conrad," said the girl.

So they began to descend on the snow in the direction which its slope offered them. The boy led the little girl by her hand. However, after having descended some distance, the slope no longer followed that direction and the snowfield rose again. The children, therefore, changed their direction and descended toward a shallow basin. But there they struck ice again. So they climbed up along the side of the basin in order to seek a way down in some other direction. A slope led them downward, but that gradually became so steep that they could scarcely keep a footing and feared lest they should slide down. So they retraced their steps upward to find some other way down. After having clambered up the snowfield a long time and then continuing along an even ridge, they found it to be as before: either the snow sloped so steeply that they would have fallen, or it ascended so that they feared it would lead to the very peak of the mountain. And thus it continued to be.

Then they had the idea of finding the direction from which they had come and of descending to the red post. As it is not snowing and the sky is bright, thought the boy, they should be able, after all, to see the spot where the post ought to be, and to descend down from it to Gschaid.

The boy told his little sister his thought and she followed him.

But the way down to the " neck " was not to be found.

However clear the sun shone, however beautifully the snowy heights stood there, and the fields of snow lay there, yet they could not recognize the places over which they had come the day before. Yesterday, all had been veiled by the immense snowfall, so they had scarcely seen a couple of feet ahead of them, and then all had been a mingled white and gray. They had seen only the rocks along and between which they had passed; but today also they had seen many rocks and they all resembled those they had seen the day before. Today, they left fresh tracks behind them in the snow; yesterday, all tracks had been obliterated by the falling snow. Neither could they gather from the aspect of things which way they had to return to the " neck," since all places looked alike. Snow and snow again. But on they marched and hoped to succeed in the end. They avoided the declivities and did not attempt to climb steep slopes.

Today also they frequently stood still to listen; but they heard nothing, not the slightest sound. Neither was anything to be seen excepting the dazzling snow from which emerged, here and there, black peaks and ribs of rock.

At last the boy thought he saw a flame skipping over a far-away snow-slope. It bobbed up and dipped down again. Now they saw it, and then again they did not. They remained standing and steadfastly gazed in that direction. The flame kept on skipping up and down and seemed to be approaching, for they saw it grow bigger and skipping more plainly. It did not disappear so often and for so long a time as before. After awhile they heard in the still blue air faintly, very faintly, something like the long note of a

shepherd's horn. As if from instinct, both children shouted aloud. A little while, and they heard the sound again. They shouted again and remained standing on the same spot. The flame also came nearer. The sound was heard for the third time, and this time more plainly. The children answered again by shouting loudly. After some time, they also recognized that it was no flame they had seen but a red flag which was being swung. At the same time the shepherd's horn resounded closer to them and the children made reply.

"Sanna," cried the boy, "there come people from Gschaid. I know the flag, it is the red flag that the stranger gentleman planted on the peak, when he had climbed the Gars with the young hunter, so that the reverend father could see it with his spyglass, and that was to be the sign that they had reached the top, and the stranger gentleman gave him the flag afterward as a present. You were a real small child, then."

"Yes, Conrad."

After awhile the children could also see the people near the flag, like little black dots that seemed to move. The call of the horn came again and again, and ever nearer. Each time, the children made answer.

Finally they saw on the snow-slope opposite them several men with the flag in their midst coast down on their Alpenstocks. When they had come closer the children recognized them. It was the shepherd Philip with his horn, his two sons, the young hunter, and several men of Gschaid.

"God be blessed," cried Philip, "why here you are. The whole mountain is full of people. Let one of you run down at once to the Sideralp chalet and ring the bell, that they down below may hear that we have found them; and one must climb the Krebsstein and plant the flag there so that they in the valley may see it and fire off the mortars, so that the people searching in the Millsdorf forest may hear it and that they may kindle the smudge-fires in Gschaid, and all those on the mountain may come down to the Sideralp chalet. This is a Christmas for you!"

"I shall climb down to the chalet," one said.

"And I shall carry the flag to the Krebsstein," said another.

"And we will get the children down to the Sideralp chalet as well as we can, if God help us;" said Philip.

One of Philip's sons made his way downward, and the other went his way with the flag.

The hunter took the little girl by her hand, and the shepherd Philip the boy. The others helped as they could. Thus they started out. They turned this way and that. Now they followed one direction, now they took the opposite course, now they climbed up, now down, always through snow, and the surroundings seemed to remain the same. On very steep inclines they fastened climbing-irons to their feet and carried the children. Finally, after a long time, they heard the ringing of a little bell that sounded up to them soft and thin, which was the first sign the lower regions sent to them again. They must really have descended quite far; for now they saw a snowy bluish peak lift up its head to a great height above them. The bell, however, which they had heard was that of the Sideralp chalet which was being rung, because there the meeting was to be. As they proceeded farther they also heard in the still atmosphere the faint report of the mortars which were fired at the sight of the flag; and still later they saw thin columns of smoke rising into the still air.

When they, after a little while, descended a gentle slope they caught sight of the Sideralp chalet. They approached. In the hut a fire was burning, the mother of the children was there, and with a terrible cry she sank in the snow as she saw her children coming with the hunter.

Then she ran up, looked them all over, wanted to give them something to eat, wanted to warm them, and bed them in the hay that was there; but soon she convinced herself that the children were more stimulated by their rescue than she had thought and only required some warm food and a little rest, both of which they now obtained.

When, after some time of rest, another group of men descended the snow-slope while the little bell continued tolling, the children themselves ran out to see who they were. It was the shoemaker, the former mountaineer, with Alpenstock and climbing-irons, accompanied by friends and comrades.

"Sebastian, here they are!" cried the woman.

He, however, remained speechless, shaking with emotion, and then ran up to her. Then his lips moved as if he wanted to say something, but he said nothing, caught the children in his embrace and held them long. Thereupon he turned to his wife, embraced her and cried "Sanna, Sanna!"

After awhile he picked up his hat which had fallen on the snow and stepped among the men as if to speak. But he only said: "Neighbors and friends, I thank you!"

After waiting awhile, until the children had recovered from their excitement, he said: "If we are all together we may start, in God's name."

"We are not all together yet, I believe," said the shepherd Philip, "but those who are still missing will know from the smoke that we have found the children and will go home when they find the chalet empty."

All got ready to depart.

The Sideralp chalet is not so very far from Gschaid, from whose windows one can, in summer time, very well see the green pasture on which stands the gray hut with its small belfry; but below it there is a perpendicular wall with a descent of many fathoms which one could climb in summer, with the help of climbing-irons, but which was not to be scaled in winter. They were, therefore, compelled to go by way of the "neck" in order to get down to Gschaid. On their way, they came to the Sider meadow which is still nearer to Gschaid so that from it one could see the windows in the village.

As they were crossing these meadows, the bell of the Gschaid church sounded up to them bright and clear, announcing the Holy Transubstantiation.

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THE BARBER SHOP

BENJAMIN VAUTHIER

On account of the general commotion that obtained in Gschaid that morning, the celebration of the High-mass had been deferred, as the priest thought the children would soon be found. Finally, however, as still no news came, the holy mass had to be celebrated.

When they heard the bell announcing the Holy Transsubstantiation, all those crossing the Sider meadow sank upon their knees in the snow and prayed. When the tolling had ceased they arose and marched on.

The shoemaker was carrying his little girl for the most part and made her tell him all.

When they were descending toward the forest of the "neck" they saw tracks which, he declared, came not from shoes of his make.

The explanation came soon. Attracted probably by the many voices they heard, another body of men joined them. It was the dyer — ash-gray in the face from fright — descending at the head of his workmen, apprentices, and several men of Millsdorf.

"They climbed over the glacier and the crevasses without knowing it," the shoemaker shouted to his father-in-law.

"There they are — there they are — praised be the Lord," answered the dyer, "I knew already that they had been on the mountain when your messenger came to us in the night, and we had searched through the whole forest with lanterns and had not found anything — and then, when it dawned, I observed that on the road which leads on the left up toward the snow-mountain, on the spot where the post stands — that there some twigs and stalks were broken off, as children like to do on their way — and then I knew it, and then they could not get away, because they walked in the hollow, and then between the rocks on to the ridge which is so steep on either side that they could not get down. They just had to ascend. After making this observation I sent a message to Gschaid, but the wood-cutter Michael who carried it told us at his return, when he joined us up there

near the ice, that you had found them already, and so we came down again."

"Yes," said Michael, "I told you so because the red flag is hung out on the Krebsstein, and this was the sign agreed upon in Gschaid. And I told you that they all would come down this way, as one cannot climb down the precipice."

"And kneel down and thank God on your knees, my son-in-law," continued the dyer, "that there was no wind. A hundred years will pass before there will be another such fall of snow that will come down straight like wet cords hanging from a pole. If there had been any wind the children would have perished.

"Yes, let us thank God, let us thank God," said the shoemaker.

The dyer who since the marriage of his daughter had never been in Gschaid decided to accompany the men to the village.

When they approached the red post where the side-road began they saw the sleigh waiting for them which the shoemaker had ordered there, whatever the outcome. They let mother and children get into it, covered them well up in the rugs and furs provided for them and let them ride ahead to Gschaid.

The others followed and arrived in Gschaid by afternoon.

Those who still were on the mountain and had only learned through the smoke that the signal for returning had been given, gradually also found their way into the valley. The last to appear in the evening was the son of the shepherd Philip who had carried the red flag to the Krebsstein and planted it there.

In Gschaid there was also grandmother waiting for them who had driven across the "neck."

"Never, never," she cried, "will I permit the children to cross the 'neck' in winter!"

The children were confused by all this commotion. They received something more to eat and were put to bed then. Late in the evening, when they had recovered somewhat,

and some neighbors and friends had assembled in the living-room and were talking about the event, their mother came into the sleeping-room. As she sat by Sanna's bed and caressed her, the little girl said: "Mother, last night, when we sat on the mountain, I saw the holy Christ-child."

"Oh, my dear, darling child," answered her mother, "he sent you some presents, too, and you shall get them right soon."

The paste-board boxes had been unpacked and the candles lit, and now the door into the living-room was opened, and from their bed the children could behold their belated, brightly gleaming, friendly Christmas tree. Notwithstanding their utter fatigue they wanted to be dressed partly, so that they could go into the room. They received their presents, admired them, and finally fell asleep over them.

In the inn at Gschaid it was more lively than ever, this evening. All who had not been to church were there, and the others too. Each related what he had seen and heard, what he had done or advised, and the experiences and dangers he had gone through. Especial stress was laid on how everything could have been done differently and better.

This occurrence made an epoch in the history of Gschaid. It furnished material for conversation for a long time; and for many years to come people will speak about it on bright days when the mountain is seen with especial clearness, or when they tell strangers of the memorable events connected with it.

Only from this day on the children were really felt to belong to the village and were not any longer regarded as strangers in it but as natives whom the people had fetched down to them from the mountain.

Their mother Sanna also now was a native of Gschaid.

The children, however, will not forget the mountain and will look up to it more attentively, when they are in the garden; when, as in the past, the sun is shining beautifully and the linden-tree is sending forth its fragrance, when the bees are humming and the mountain looks down upon them beautifully blue, like the soft sky.

WILHELM HEINRICH RIEHL

By Otto Heller, Ph.D.

Professor of the German Language and Literature, Washington University

WILHELM HEINRICH RIEHL was born May 6, 1823, in Bieberich on the Rhine, of parents so poor that after his father's early death his mother had to deprive herself of every comfort in order to enable the lad to go to the university. At Bonn he swerved from his theological bent — chiefly through the influence of two of his professors, Ernst Moritz Arndt and Ch. F. Dahlmann — and made up his mind to devote his studies henceforth to the scientific as well as patriotic purpose of comprehending the character and history of his own people. Even in the many articles concerning popular ways and manners which he had already contributed to periodicals he revealed a thorough firsthand acquaintance with the land and the people, in particular the peasantry, as he had observed them in the course of numerous holiday tramps.

Soon after leaving the university he drifted into professional journalism. He held a number of responsible editorial positions, nor did he wholly withdraw from such work when in 1859 he was called to the newly created chair of the History of Civilization and of Statistics at Munich. Both in his professional and publicistic capacity he wrote prolifically to the very end of his life, November 16, 1897. His works are classifiable, roughly, under three headings: History of Culture, Sociology, and Fiction. Of the large number, the following, chronologically enumerated, are considered the most important.

The Natural History of the People, being the Elements of German Social Politics (1851–1869), in four volumes;

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Musical Character-Portraits (1853); *Culture-historical Stories* (1856); *The Palatine People* (1857); *Studies in the History of Culture, from Three Centuries* (1859); *German Work* (1861); *Tales of the Olden Time* (1863); *New Story-Book* (1868); *From my Nook* (1874); *At Eventide* (1880); *Riddles of Life* (1888); *Religious Studies of a Worldling* (1892–1893); *A Whole Man* (1897).

Riehl's position in the literature of Germany cannot be defined solely, nor even mainly, on the basis of his imaginative writings. As a romancer he falls far short of Gustav Freytag, whose *Pictures of the German Past* served Riehl obviously for a model, and of Jeremias Gotthelf, in whose manner, though perhaps unconsciously, he likewise strove to write. It is characteristic of his tales that they invariably play against a native background, which, however, stretches across more than full ten centuries, and that, while failing to prove any high poetic vocation for their author, they demonstrate his singularly acute perception of cultural tendencies and values. Equally keen is the appreciation shown in these stories of the dominant national traits, whether commendable or otherwise: German contentiousness, stubbornness, envy, jealousy and *Schadenfreude,* i. e., the malicious joy over calamities that befall others, are impartially balanced against German self-reliance, sturdiness, love of truth, sense of duty, sincerity, unselfishness, loyalty, and depth of feeling.

On the whole, the inclusion of Riehl among the most eminent German writers of the nineteenth century is due far less to his works of fiction than to a just recognition of his primacy among historians of culture, on account of the extraordinary reach of his influence. This influence he certainly owed as much to his rare art of popular presentation as to his profound scholarship. Nevertheless the intrinsic scientific worth of these more or less popular writings is vouched for by the consensus of leading historians and other specially competent judges who, regarding Riehl's work as epoch-making and in some essential aspects

fundamental, recognize him as one of the organizers of modern historical science and in particular as the foremost pioneer in the exploration of the widest area within the territory of human knowledge; in fine, as the most efficient representative of the History of Civilization.

Kulturgeschichte, as Riehl used the term, connoted a rather ideal conception, namely, that of an interpretative record of the sum total of human civilization. It required a high challenge like that to energize and unify the requisite laborious research in so many different directions: art, letters, science, economics, politics, social life, and what not. The History of Civilization, as understood by Riehl, embraces the results gained in all the special branches of historical study, political history included.

By a formulation so comprehensive and exacting, Riehl himself stood committed to the investigation of the national life not only in the breadth and variety of its general aspect, but also in its minuter processes that had so far been left unheeded. But under his care even the study of seemingly trite details quickened the approach to that fixed ideal of a History of Civilization that should have for its ultimate object nothing less than the revelation of the spirit of history itself. The goal might never be attained, yet the quest for it would at all events disclose "the laws under which racial civilizations germinate, mature, bloom, and perish."

Personally Riehl applied the bulk of his labors to the two contiguous fields of Folklore and Art History. Folklore (*Volkskunde*) is here taken in his own definition, namely, as the science which uncovers the recondite causal relations between all perceptible manifestations of a nation's life and its physical and historical environment. Riehl never lost sight, in any of his distinctions, of that inalienable affinity between land and people; the solidarity of a nation, its very right of existing as a political entity, he derived from homogeneity as to origin, language, custom, habitat. The validity of this view is now generally

accepted in theory, while its practical application to science must necessarily depend upon the growth of special knowledge. In *The Palatine People* Riehl presented a standard treatise upon one of the ethnic types of the German race, an illustration as it were of his own theorems.

Among Riehl's contributions to the History of Art, the larger number concern the art of music. He was qualified for this work by a sure and sound critical appreciation rooted in thorough technical knowledge. Here again, following his keen scent for the distinguishing racial qualities, he gave his attention mainly to the popular forms of composition; at the same time his penetrating historic insight enabled him to account for the distinctive artistic character of the great composers by a due weighing of their individual attributes against the controlling influences of their time. It is hardly necessary to add that in his reflections music was never detached from its generic connection with the fine arts, inclusive of industrial, decorative, and domestic art.

Like many another student and lover of the past Riehl was a man of conservative habits of mind, without, however, deserving to be classed as a confirmed reactionary. His anti-democratic tendency of thought sprang plausibly enough from convictions and beliefs which owed their existence, in some part at least, to strained and whimsical analogies. His defense of a static order of society rested at bottom upon a sturdy hatred of Socialism, then in the earliest stage of its rise. This ingrained aversion to the new, suggested to him a rather curious sort of rational or providential sanction for the old. He discerned, by an odd whim of the fancy, in the physical as well as the spiritual constitution of Germany a preëstablished principle of "trialism." According to this queer notion, Germany is in every respect divided *in partes tres.* The territorial conformation itself, with its clean subdivision into lowland, intermediate, and highland, demonstrates the natural tripartition to which a like "threeness" of climate, nation-

ality, and even of religion corresponds. Hence the tripartition of the population into peasantry, bourgeoisie, and nobility should be upheld as an inviolable, foreordained institution, and to this end the separate traditions of the classes be piously conserved. Educational agencies ought to subserve the specific needs of the different ranks of society and be diversified accordingly. Riehl would even hark back to wholly out-dated and discarded customs, provided they seemed to him clearly the outflow of a vital class-consciousness. For instance, he would have restored the trade corporations to their medieval status; inhibited the free disposal of farming land, and governed the German aristocracy under the English law of primogeniture.

Altogether, Riehl's propensity for spanning a fragile analogy between concrete and abstract phenomena of life is apt to weaken the structural strength of his argumentation. Yet even his boldest comparisons do not lack in illuminative suggestiveness. Take, for example, the following passage from *Field and Forest:* "In the contrast between the forest and the field is manifest the most simple and natural preparatory stage of the multiformity and variety of German social life, that richness of peculiar national characteristics in which lies concealed the tenacious rejuvenating power of our nation." (See p. 418 of this volume.)

The predisposition to draw large inferences coupled with that pronounced conservatism detract in a measure from the authenticity of Riehl's work in the department of Social Science, which to him is fundamentally "the doctrine of the natural inequality of mankind." (See p. 417 of this volume.)

That Riehl, despite his conservative bias, is not a reactionary out and out has already been stated. He stands for evolutionary, not revolutionary, social reform; in his opinion the social-economic order can be bettered by means of the gradual self-improvement of society, and in no other way. Unless, moreover, the improvement be effected without the

sacrifice of that basic subdivision of society, the needful social stability is bound to be upset by the "proletariat"—namely, the entire "fourth estate" reinforced by the ever increasing number of deserters, renegades, and outcasts who have drifted away from their appointed social level.

Notwithstanding this rather dogmatic attitude of which, among other things, a sweeping rejection of "Woman Emancipation," was one corollary, Riehl's organic theory of society as explicitly stated in his *Civic Society* has a great and permanent usefulness for our time because of its thoroughgoing method and its clear-cut statement of problems and issues. The leader of the most advanced school of modern historians, Professor Karl Lamprecht, goes so far as to declare that the social studies of W. H. Riehl constitute the very corner stone of scientific Sociology. In this achievement, to which all of his scholarly endeavors were tributary, Riehl's significance as a historian of culture may be said to culminate.

WILHELM HEINRICH RIEHL

FIELD AND FOREST*

TRANSLATED BY FRANCES H. KING

THE political observer who wishes to understand the intimate connection between a country and its people may well start with a superficial survey of the external aspects of a country. He sees before him mountain and valley, field and forest — such familiar contrasts that one scarcely notices them any longer; and yet they are the explanation of many subtle and intimate traits in the life of the people. A clever schoolmaster could string a whole system of folklore on the thread of mountain and valley, field and forest. I will be content to invite further meditation by some thoughts on field and forest, the *tame* and the *wild* cultivation of our soil.

In Germany this contrast still exists in all its sharpness, as we still have a real forest. England, on the contrary, has practically no really free forest left — no forest which has any social significance. This, of necessity, occasions at the very outset a number of the clearest distinctions between German and English nationality.

In every decisive popular movement in Germany the forest is the first to suffer. A large part of the peasants live in continual secret feud with the masters of the forest and their privileges; no sooner is a spark of revolution lighted, then, before everything else, there flares up among these people "the war about the forest." The insurgent rural proletariat can raise no barricades, can tear down no royal palaces, but, instead, lay waste the woodland of their

* From *The Natural History of the People.*

masters; for in their eyes this forest is the fortress of the great lord in comparison with the little unprotected plot of ground of the small farmer. As soon as the power of the State has conquered the rebellious masses, the first thing it proceeds to do is to restore the forest to its former condition and again to put in force the forest charters which had been torn up. This spectacle, modified in accordance with the spirit of the age, repeats itself in every century of our history, and it will no doubt be of constant recurrence, always in new forms, for centuries to come.

The preservation, the protection of the forest, guaranteed anew by charter, is at present (1853) once again a question of the day, and in German legislative assemblies in recent years weighty words have been uttered in favor of the forest from the point of view of the political economist. Thus it is again becoming popular to defend the poor much-abused forest. The forest, however, has not only an economic, but also a social-political value. He who from liberal political principles denies the distinction between city and country should also, after the English model, seek to do away with the distinction between the field and the forest. Wherever common possession of the forest continues to exist side by side with private possession of the field, there will never be any real social equality among the people. In the cultivation of the soil the forest represents the aristocracy; the field represents the middle class.

The concessions made by the different governments in the matter of forest-clearing, of the preservation of game, the free use of the forest, etc., form a pretty exact instrument with which to measure the triumphant advance of the aristocratic or the democratic spirit. In the year 1848 many a vast tract of forest was sacrificed in order to purchase therewith a small fraction of popularity. Every revolution does harm to the forest, but, provided it does not wish to strangle itself, it leaves the field untouched.

After December 2, 1851, the gathering of fallen leaves in the forest was countenanced in Alsace in order to make the

Napoleonic *coup d' état* popular. It was cleverly thought out; for the never-resting war about the forest can be for a government a mighty lever of influence on a class of the people which is, in general, hard enough to swing round. The concession permitting the gathering of leaves, and manhood suffrage, are one and the same act of shrewd Bonapartist policy, only aimed at different classes. Thus social politics lurks even behind the forest-trees and beneath the rustling red leaves of last autumn — a strange circle of cause and effect! The immoderate cultivation of potatoes contributes not a little to saddle the modern State with the proletariat, but this same cultivation of potatoes, which deprives the small peasant of straw, drives him into the forest to seek for withered leaves in place of straw for his cattle, and thus places again in the hands of the State authorities a means — based upon the strange historic ruin of our forest-franchises — of curbing a powerful part of the proletariat.

Popular sentiment in Germany considers the forest to be the one large piece of property which has not yet been completely portioned off. In contrast to field, meadow, and garden, every one has a certain right to the forest, even if it consists merely in being able to run about in it at pleasure. In the right, or the permission, to gather wood and dry leaves and to pasture cattle, in the distribution of the so-called " loose-wood " from the parish forests, and such acts, lie the historic foundation of an almost communist tradition. Where else has anything of the kind been perpetuated except in the case of the forest? The latter is the root of truly German social conditions. In very truth the forest, with us, has not yet been completely portioned off; therefore every political agitator who wishes to pay out in advance to the people a little bit of " prosperity " as earnest-money of the promised universal prosperity, immediately lays hands upon the forest. By means of the forest, and by no other, you can substantially preach communism to the German peasant. It is well known that the idea of

the forest as private property was introduced at a late date and gained ground gradually among the German people.

Forest, pasturage, water, are, in accordance with a primitive German principle of jurisprudence, intended for the common use of all inhabitants of the same district. The old alliteration "wood, wold and water," has not yet been entirely forgotten by the people. Thus a dim and feeble memory, a well-nigh forgotten legend, looking upon the common claim to general use of the forest as a natural right which had been in force since the beginning of time, confirms the conclusions of the historian, according to whom community of possession of the forest was a true old Germanic idea. Such a line of argument, however, could also bring us to the further conclusion that this community of possession has only once been fully realized — namely, by and in the primeval forest.

In times of excitement men have worked out on paper wonderful arithmetical problems concerning the partition of the soil of the forest into small plots of ground for the poor. Paper is very forbearing, and it looks very idyllic and comfortable to see, carefully calculated before our eyes, how many hundreds of dear little estates could be made out of the meagre soil of the forest, on which the proletarian could settle down to the contented patriarchal existence of a farmer. Practical attempts along this line have not been wanting, but, instead of diminishing the proletariat, such an increase of small farms only served to augment it all the more; practice is ahead of theory. The people should have thanked God that the forest, almost alone, had not been parceled out; yet, instead, they were ready even to destroy the forest in order to assist the small farmer! In many parts of Germany the poor farmer would starve if the traditional free use of the forest did not form a steady annuity for him. The forest helps in a hundred ways to place the petty farms on a solid foundation; if, therefore, men destroy the forests in order to increase the number of petty farms, they are undermining firmly rooted

existences in order, in their place, to plant new ones upon the sand.

It is a source of great comfort for the social politician that, in Germany, the contrast of forest and field yet remains so generally established that we still have a whole group of regular forest lands. A nation which still holds fast to the forest as a common public possession along with the field that is divided off into private property, has not only a present but also a future. Thus in Russia's impenetrable forests, whose inner thickets are, in the words of the poet Mickiewicz, such a deep mystery that they are as little known to the eye of the huntsman as the depths of the sea are known to the eye of the fisherman — in these forests is hidden the future of the great Slav Empire; while in the English and French provinces, where there is no longer a genuine forest, we are confronted by an already partially extinct national life. The United States of America whose society is permeated with materialism, and whose strange national life is made up of a mixture of youthful energy and of torpor, would rapidly hurry on to their destruction if they did not have in the background the primeval forest which is raising up a fresher, more vigorous, race to take the place of the rapidly degenerating inhabitants of the coast-lands. The wilderness is an immense dormant capital in ready cash, possessing which as a basis the North Americans may, for a long time to come, risk the most daring social and political stock-jobbing. But woe to them should they consume the capital itself!

The German forest and the privileges and compulsory service connected with it are a last surviving fragment of the Middle Ages. Nowhere are the ruins of the feudal elements more plainly visible than in the forest regulations; the forest alone assures the rural population — in true medieval style — a subsidy for its existence, untouched by the fury of competition and small-farming.

Therefore do the demagogues so often try to change the war " about " the forest into a war " against " the forest;

they know that the forest must first be hewn down before the Middle Ages can be wiped out of Germany, and, on that account, the forest always fares worse than anything else in every popular uprising. For though in our rapidly moving century there is an average interval of fifteen years allowed between one revolution and another, yet a good forest tree requires a much longer time to reach full growth. At least the incalculable loss suffered by our forest property in the year 1848, through lavish waste, plundering, and wanton ruination, has certainly, up to the present time, not been made good by natural means.

In Anhalt-Dessau it was decided, in an ordinance of the year 1852, that all oak-trees standing on private ground should, in accordance with ancient custom, remain the property of the sovereign. In this conception the contrast between forest and field is an absolutely ideal one; even the separate forest tree is in itself still a forest and has forest-rights, just as in localities where all the forests have been cut down the peasants still frequently designate a single remaining tree by the title of their "parish forest."

The political economists argue that the amount of wood which can be supplied by our present forests is by no means too great for the satisfaction of the demand — that, if anything, it is too small. Those, however, whose enmity to the forest is based on political principles detail to us the yearly increasing substitutes for wood, and point triumphantly to the not far distant time when forests will no longer be needed, when all forest land can be turned into cultivated land, so that every glebe of earth in civilized Europe shall produce sufficient nourishment for a man. This idea of seeing every little patch of earth dug up by human hands strikes the imagination of every natural man as something appallingly uncanny; it is especially repugnant to the German spirit. When that comes to pass it will be high time for the day of judgment to dawn. Emmanuel Geibel, in his poem *Mythus*, has symbolized this natural aversion to the extreme measures of a civilization which would absorb

every form of wild nature. He creates a legend about the demon of steam, who is chained and forced to do menial service. The latter will break his bonds again and with his primitive titanic strength, which has been slumbering in the heart of the world, he will destroy the very earth itself when once the whole ball has been covered with the magic network of the railroads. Before that time all the forests will have been turned into cultivated land.

The advocates of the forest resort to a feeble method of defense when they demand the preservation of the present moderate forest area solely on economic grounds. The social-political reasons certainly weigh quite as heavy. Hew down the forest and you will at the same time destroy the historic *bourgeois* society. In the destruction of the contrast between field and forest you are taking a vital element away from German nationality. Man does not live by bread alone; even if we no longer required any wood we should still demand the forest. The German people need the forest as a man needs wine, although for our mere necessities it might be quite sufficient if the apothecary alone stored away ten gallons in his cellar. If we do not require any longer the dry wood to warm our outer man, then all the more necessary will it be for the race to have the green wood, standing in all its life and vigor, to warm the inner man.

In our woodland villages — and whoever has wandered through the German mountains knows that there are still many genuine woodland villages in the German Fatherland — the remains of primitive civilization are still preserved to our national life, not only in their shadiness but also in their fresh and natural splendor. Not only the woodland, but likewise the sand dunes, the moors, the heath, the tracts of rock and glacier, all wildernesses and desert wastes, are a necessary supplement to the cultivated field lands. Let us rejoice that there is still so much wilderness left in Germany. In order for a nation to develop its power it must embrace at the same time the most varied

phases of evolution. A nation over-refined by culture and satiated with prosperity is a dead nation, for whom nothing remains but, like Sardanapalus, to burn itself up together with all its magnificence. The *blasé* city man, the fat farmer of the rich corn-land, may be the men of the present; but the poverty-stricken peasant of the moors, the rough, hardy peasant of the forests, the lonely, self-reliant Alpine shepherd, full of legends and songs — these are the men of the future. Civil society is founded on the doctrine of the natural inequality of mankind. Indeed, in this inequality of talents and of callings is rooted the highest glory of society, for it is the source of its inexhaustible vital energy. As the sea preserves the vigor of the people of the coast-lands by keeping them in a hardy natural state, so does the forest produce a similar effect on the people of the interior. Therefore since Germany has such a large expanse of interior country, it needs just that much more forest-land than does England. The genuine woodland villagers, the foresters, wood-cutters, and forest laborers are the strong, rude seamen among us landlubbers. Uproot the forests, level the mountains, and shut out the sea, if you want to equalize society in a closet-civilization where all will have the same polish and all be of the same color. We have seen that entire flourishing lands which have been robbed of the protecting forests have fallen prey to the devastating floods of the mountain streams and the scorching breath of the storms. A large part of Italy, the paradise of Europe, is a land which has ceased to live, because its soil no longer bears any forests under the protection of which it might become rejuvenated. And not only is the land exhausted, but the people are, likewise. A nation must die off when it can no longer have recourse to the backwoodsmen in order to gather from them the fresh strength of a natural, hardy, national life. A nation without considerable forest-property is worthy of the same consideration as a nation without requisite sea-coast. We must preserve our forests not only so that our stoves shall not be

cold in winter, but also that the pulse of the nation's life shall continue to throb on warmly and cheerfully — in short, so that Germany shall remain German.

The inhabitants of the German woodland villages have almost always a far fresher, more individual, mental stamp than the inhabitants of the villages of the plain. In the latter we find more sleek prosperity side by side with greater degeneracy of morals, than in the former. The inhabitant of the woodland villages is often very poor, but the discontented proletarian dwells far more frequently in the villages of the plain. The latter is more important in an economic sense, the former in a social-political one. The forest peasant is rougher, more quarrelsome, but also merrier than the peasant of the field; the former often turns out a genial rascal, when the dull peasant of the field in like case would have turned into a heartless miser. The preservation or the extinction of ancient popular customs and costumes does not depend so much on the contrast between mountainous-country and flat-country as on that between the woodland and the field, if one includes in the former the heaths, moors, and other wild regions. The forest is the home of national art; the forest peasant still continues through many generations to sing his peculiar song along with the birds of the woods, when the neighboring villager of the plain has long ago entirely forgotten the folk-song. A village without woods is like a city without historical buildings, without monuments, without art-collections, without theatres and music — in short, without emotional or artistic stimulation. The forest is the gymnasium of youth and often the banqueting hall of the aged. Does not that weigh at least as heavy as the economic question of the timber? In the contrast between the forest and the field is manifest the most simple and natural preparatory stage of the multiformity and variety of German social life, that richness of peculiar national characteristics in which lies concealed the tenacious rejuvenating power of our nation.

The century of the pig-tail possessed no eye for the forest and, in consequence, no understanding of the natural life of the people. Everywhere in the German provinces they removed the princely pleasure-seats from the woody mountains to the woodless flat country. But then, to be sure, the art of the pig-tail age was almost entirely un-German. For the artists of the pig-tail the forest was too irregular in design, too humpbacked in form, and too dark in color. It was shoved into the background as a flat accessory of the landscape, while, on the contrary, the landscape painters of the preceding great period of art drew the inspiration for their forest pictures from the very depths of the forest solitudes. No painter of Romance origin has ever painted the forest as Ruysdael and Everdingen did; they in their best pictures place themselves right in the midst of the deepest thickets. Poussin and Claude Lorraine have made magnificent studies of the forest, but Ruysdael knows the forest by heart from his childhood, as he knows the Lord's Prayer.

The Frenchified lyric poets of the school of Hagedorn and Gleim sing forest-songs as though they longed after the forest from hearsay. Then, with the resurrected folk-song and the resuscitated Shakespeare, who has poetically explored deeper into the glory of the forest than all others, the English art of gardening, an imitation of the free nature of the forest, reaches Germany. At the same time, in German poetry, Goethe again strikes the true forest-note which he has learned from the folk-song; and from the moment that the forest no longer appears too disorderly for the poets, the coarse, vigorous national life no longer seems to them too dirty and rugged for artistic treatment. The most recent and splendid revival of landscape painting is intimately connected with the renewed absorption of the artist in the study of the forest. We also find that, at the time when Goethe was writing his best songs, Mozart and Haydn were, with equal enthusiasm, composing music for the folk-song, as if they had " learned it listening to the birds "—

that is to say, to the birds in the woods, not, like one of the new branch schools of romantic miniature poets, to the birds singing their sickly songs in gilded cages in a parlor.

The forest alone permits us civilized men to enjoy the dream of a personal freedom undisturbed by the surveillance of the police. There at least one can ramble about as one will, without being bound to keep to the common patented high-road. Yes, there a staid mature man can even run, jump, climb to his heart's content, without being considered a fool by that old stickler, Dame Propriety. These fragments of ancient Germanic sylvan liberty have happily been preserved almost everywhere in Germany. They no longer exist in neighboring lands which have greater political freedom but where annoying fences very soon put an end to an unfettered desire to roam at will. What good does the citizen of the large North American cities get out of his lack of police surveillance in the streets, if he cannot even run around at will in the woods of the nearest suburb because the odious fences force him, more despotically than a whole regiment of police, to keep to the road indicated by the sign-post? What good do the Englishmen get out of their free laws, since they have nothing but parks inclosed by chains, since they have scarcely any free forest left? The constraint of customs and manners in England and North America is insupportable to a German. As the English no longer even know how to appreciate the free forest, it is no wonder that they require a man to bring along a black dress-suit and a white cravat, in addition to the ticket-money, in order to obtain entrance to the theatre or a concert. Germany has a future of greater social liberty before her than England, for she has preserved the free forest. They might perhaps be able to root up the forests in Germany, but to close them to the public would cause a revolution.

From this German sylvan liberty which peeps forth so strangely from amidst our other modern conditions, flows a deeper influence upon the manners and character of every

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AN OFFICIAL DINNER IN THE COUNTRY

BENJAMIN VAUTIER

class of the people than is dreamed of by many a stay-at-home. On the other hand, in a thousand different characteristics in the life of our great cities we perceive how far the real forest has withdrawn from these cities, how alienated from the forest their inhabitants have grown to be. One sees, of late, much more green in our large German cities; walks on the ramparts and municipal parks and public gardens have been laid out; open squares, too, have been decorated with grass plots, bushes and flowers. In no former age has the art of gardening done so much to enhance the picturesque charm of our cities as at the present day. I do not by any means wish to underestimate the high value of such public grounds, but they are something entirely different from the free forest; they cannot possibly form any equivalent for it, and the forest unhappily withdraws farther and farther away from the city. Art and nature have both an equally just claim upon us; but art can never make up to us for the loss of nature, not even though it were an art which takes nature itself as the material upon which to work, like the art of gardening.

The free forest and the free ocean have, with profound significance, been called by poetry the *sacred* forest and the *sacred* ocean, and nowhere does this sacredness of virgin nature produce a more intense effect than when the forest rises directly out of the sea. The real, sacred forest is where the roar of the breaking waves mingles with the rustling of the tree-tops in one loud hymn; but it is also where, in the hushed mid-day silence of the German mountain forests, the wanderer, miles away from every human habitation, hears nothing but the beating of his own heart in the church-like stillness of the wilderness.

Yet even in the free, sacred forest we find some splendid examples of the humor of the police. On the Island of Rügen, when one enters what is celebrated throughout northern Germany as a sort of primeval beech-forest of the Granitz,* from the trunk of a huge tree a sign-board meets

* Hilly woodland in the eastern part of the Island of Rügen.

the wanderer's gaze, bearing an inscription stating that in this forest one may go about only if accompanied by a forest-keeper of His Highness, the Prince of Putbus, at five silver groschen the hour. To enjoy the awe of a primeval forest in the company of a member of the forest-police, at five silver groschen the hour — that only a born Berliner is capable of!

It is owing to a strange confusion of ideas that many people consider the uprooting of the forests in the Germany of the nineteenth century to be still a reclaiming of the soil, an act of inner colonization, by means of which the uprooted piece of ground is for the first time given over to cultivation. For us the forest is no longer the wilderness out of which we must force our way into cleared land, but it is a veritable magnificent safeguard of our most characteristic national life. Therefore it was that I called it the wild cultivation of the soil in contrast to the tame cultivation of the field. In our day, to root out the soil of the forest no longer means making it arable; it simply means exchanging one form of cultivation for another. He who estimates the value of the culture of the soil merely according to the percentage of clear profit accruing from it, will wish to clear forest-land in order to make it arable. We, however, do not estimate the various forms of cultivation of the soil only by the standard of their money value, but also by that of their ideal worth. The fact that our soil is cultivated in so many various ways is one of the chief causes of our wealth of individual social organizations, and therefore of the vitality of our society itself.

The forest represents the aristocratic element in the cultivation of the soil. Its value consists more in what it represents than in what it produces and in the profit which it yields. The rich man alone can afford to manage and cultivate a forest; indeed, often the richest is not rich enough to do so, and therefore it is just that the State, as the sum total of the country's wealth, should be the first and largest forest proprietor. To cultivate the forest solely in the interest of the contemporary generation is a

wretched sort of copse-wood business; large trees are raised for future generations. Therefore the forest is, primarily, a subject of national economy and, secondarily, one of domestic economy. In the forest the interests of the entire nation must be considered; it must be, as far as possible, equally distributed over the whole land, for its treasures interfere with the facilities of traffic. These are thoughts which might make any genuine forest proprietor proud of his own particular forest.

For the opponents of the conservation of large landed estates the forest will always be the worst stumbling-block, for it will never be possible to establish an even apparently successful forestry on a small scale. Where agriculture is concerned, the advantage of small farming is open to discussion; but he who would not see the pitifulness of forestry on a small scale must hold his hands before both eyes. In proportion as forestry is carried on in a small way, that is to say, in so far as it shall be exclusively operated so as to obtain the largest possible income out of the smallest possible capital and with the shortest possible delay, the forest loses its historic stamp, its cultural influence on the social and esthetic education of the nation, and on the characteristic distinctions of society.

Germany is not separated into field and woodland in such a manner that one part is dedicated almost exclusively to forestry and the other part to agriculture. Rather does the contrast between field and forest exist everywhere; it interferes with the natural division into mountainous and flat country, and thus divides and subdivides the soil of the entire German empire in a fashion of which no other country of Europe can boast. In addition, agriculture and forestry are present in every legitimate form possible. On German soil the whole scale is run through, and we have the most variegated examples all the way from spade-husbandry up to the largest private estates; in the forms of our forest economy we are much more divided than in the forms of our political economy. This unexampled multiplicity of ways of cultivating the soil is not only typical of

the wonderfully rich organization of our social conditions, but it also furnishes the most natural basis for the peculiar suppleness, many-sidedness, and receptivity of German mental-culture and civilization.

Through the recently ever-increasing artificial conversion of the proud beech and oak into short-lived pine-forests, which is due to necessity or to a short-sighted financial policy, Germany has lost at least as much of the peculiar character lent to it by its forests as through the complete uprooting of tremendous tracts of woodland. In the old forest ordinances especial weight is, with good reason, laid upon the protection of the oak-trees. Even the German Reichstag, as early as the sixteenth century, was occupied with the "art of economizing the woods." There are a few kinds of forestry which, to a certain extent, permit the parceling off of the forest — as, for example, there are localities where forestry and agriculture are carried on, turn and turn about, on the same land; or others where the practice prevails of stripping the bark off the oak-trees, a process which yields a quick monetary return — these few kinds of forestry, however, which are favorable to the parceling off of the woodland into small estates, quite destroy the conception of the forest as we understand it. An oak-forest like the above, which, as soon as the trees begin to grow really strong and sturdy, stretches forth toward the wanderer only slim, bark-stripped trunks with withered remnants of leaves, interspersed with rank miserable meadow-trees, with hazel-nut thickets and dog-rose bushes, a piece of woodland in which husbandry and forestry are completely jumbled, is actually no longer a real forest. The most valuable kind of timber furnished by the massive trunks of the oaks and beeches and for which there is absolutely no substitute elsewhere — this most specific treasure of the forest can be obtained only when the forest is managed by a rich corporation which can afford to wait a hundred years for the interest on its capital.

The olden times gauged correctly this aristocratic character of the forest when they chose it as a privileged exer-

cise-ground where princes might take their amusement, and when they ennobled the chase; although, seen by the light of a philosophic student's lamp, there is nothing very noble about it when a court, shining with the smoothest polish that civilization can give, withdraws from time to time into the barbarity of the primeval forest, and in faithful imitation of the rude life of the hunter spells out again, as it were, the first beginnings of civilization. For no title did the German princes of the Empire struggle more bitterly than for that of "Master of the Imperial Hunt." On Frankish-German soil royalty put its centralizing power to the test first and most decisively in the establishment of royal forest preserves. The king's woods from that time on stood under a higher and more efficient protection than the Common Law could have afforded. A more strikingly aristocratic prerogative than that of the forest preserves is inconceivable, and yet it is owing to this privilege that Germany still looks so green, that our mountains are not bare of trees like those of Italy, that country and people have not died off and dried up, that, in fine, such vast magnificent tracts of forest could, as a whole complete in itself, later pass over into the hands of the state.

This aristocratic love of the forest, however, went hand in hand with the forest-tyranny of the Middle Ages. The forest-trees and the game were treated with more consideration than the corn-fields and the peasants. When a cruel master wished to punish a peasant sorely he chased the game into his fields, and the hunt which was to slay the game trampled down what the latter had not devoured. The war about the forest violently forced upon the peasant the question as to whether or not the ancient privileges of the aristocracy could be justified before God and man. We possess a poem by G. A. Bürger which contrasts the naked rights of labor with the historic rights of rank in so sharp a fashion that, if it should be published today, it would undoubtedly be confiscated as communist literature. This ancient specimen of modern social-democratic poetry, characteristically, for those times, takes its theme from the

"War about the Forest;" it bears the title: *The Peasant to His Most Serene Tyrants.* Because the princely huntsman has driven the peasant through the latter's own down-trodden corn-field, followed by the halloo of the hunt, the peasant in the poem suddenly hits upon the dangerous question, "Who are you, Prince?"

The horrible punishments with which poachers and trespassers against the forest were threatened in the Middle Ages can be explained only when we see in them an outlet to the bitterness of two parties at war about the forest. In this war martial law was declared. The poacher felt that he was acting within his rights, like the pirate; neither of them wished to be considered a common thief. Above, I compared the forest with the sea; the former barbarous punishment of pirates likewise runs parallel with the cruel chastisement of trespassers against the forest. The latter still frequently thinks he is only getting back again by cunning and force a proprietorship that was snatched from him by force. There are in Germany whole villages, whole districts, where, even at the present day, poaching and trespassing against the forest are sharply distinguished from common crimes which disgrace the perpetrator. To catch a hare in their traps is, for these peasants, no more dishonorable than it is for a student to cudgel the night-watchman. Therein lurks the ancient hidden thought of the "War about the Free Forest." In the forest the turbulent country-folk in times of excitement can attack the state or the individual large landholder in his most sensitive spot. We saw how, in the year 1848, extensive tracts of forest were laid waste — not plundered — in accordance with a well concocted plan. The trees were hewn down and the trunks were intentionally left to lie and rot, or the forest was burnt down in order, with each day's quota of burned forest, to extort the concession of a new "popular demand." The old legend of the "War about the Forest" had become, once more, really live history.

And this eternal trouble-maker, the forest, which, however, as we have noticed, always gets the worst of it in

every disturbance, is at the same time a powerful safeguard for historic customs. Under its protection not only an ancient nationality but also the oldest remains of historic monuments have been preserved to us. Many of the most remarkable old names have been retained for us in the appellations of the forest districts. When German philology has finished investigating the names of villages and cities, it will turn to the names of the forest districts — which, for the most part, have changed far less than those of the districts of the plain — as to a new and rich source of knowledge. It is almost without exception under the shelter of the forest-thickets that have been conserved until the present day the town-walls of the nations which, in prehistoric times, occupied our provinces, as well as the graves and sacrificial places of our forefathers, which are our oldest monuments. And while, in the name of a purely manufacturing civilization, it has been proposed to destroy our German forests, they alone have guarded for us in their shade the earliest speaking witnesses of national industry. In the mountain-forests of the middle Rhine one often finds large dross-heaps on sequestered hill tops, far from brooks and water courses. These are the places where stood the primeval "forest smithies," whose forges were perhaps worked with the hand or the foot, and of which our heroic legends sing; these are the scenes of the first rude beginnings of our iron industry which, since then, has developed so mightily. Thus the oldest information that we possess on the subject of our German manufacturing industry starts, like our entire civilization, in the forest.

For centuries it was fitting that progress should advocate exclusively the rights of the field; now, however, it is fitting that progress should advocate the rights of the wilderness *together with* the rights of the cultivated land. And no matter how much the political economist may oppose and rebel against this fact, the folk-lorist economist must persevere, in spite of him, and fight also for the rights of the wilderness.

THE EYE FOR NATURAL SCENERY*

By Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl

translated by frances h. king

N topographical books of the pigtail age one may read that cities like Berlin, Leipzig, Augsburg, Darmstadt, Mannheim are situated in "an exceedingly pretty and agreeable region," whereas the most picturesque parts of the Black Forest, the Harz Mountains, and the Thuringian Forest are described as being "exceedingly melancholy," desolate and monotonous, or, at least, "not especially pleasing." That was by no means merely the private opinion of the individual topographer but the opinion of the age; for each century has not only its own peculiar theory of life — it has also its own peculiar theory of natural scenery.

Numberless country-seats were built a hundred years ago in barren tedious plains, and the builders thought that by so doing they had chosen the most beautiful situation imaginable; whereas the old baronial castles, in the most charming mountainous regions, were allowed to decay and go to ruin because they were not situated "delectably enough." The Bavarian Electors at that time not only laid out splendid summer residences and state gardens in the dreary woody and marshy plains of Nymphenburg and Schleissheim, but Max Emanuel even went so far as to have another artificial desert expressly constructed in the middle of one of these gardens — whose walls are already surrounded by the natural desert. Karl Theodor of the Palatinate built his Schwetzinger garden two hours away from the magnificent dales of Heidelberg, in the midst of the

* From *Studies in the Culture of Three Centuries.*

most monotonous kind of plain. Only let a region be fairly level and treeless, and immediately men were bold enough to imagine that it would be possible to conjure up there the most delightful of landscapes.

Even fifty years ago the upper Rhine valley — which is by no means without charm but is nevertheless monotonous in its flatness — was considered a real paradise of natural scenic beauty, while the middle course of the river from Ruedesheim to Coblenz, with its rich splendor of gorges, rocks, castles and forests, was appreciated rather by way of contrast. In the upper Rheingau at that time they strung out one villa after another; these are now for the most part deserted, while on the formerly neglected tracts of country confined between the mountains a new summer castle is being stuck again on the summit of every rock, or at least the ruins already hanging there are being made habitable once more. Our fathers, who thought the upper Rheingau the most beautiful corner of Germany, decorated their rooms with engravings so much in vogue at that time, similar to Claude Lorraine's broad, open landscapes of far reaching perspective filled with peace and charm. From this classical ideal of landscape we have come back again to the romantic, and the cupolas of the high mountains have supplanted the leafy temples of Claude's sacred groves with their background of the infinite sea sparkling in the sunshine.

In the seventeenth century the watering-places situated in the narrow, steep mountain valleys — many of which have now fallen into decay — were considered, for the greater part, the most frequented and most beautiful; in the eighteenth century the preference was given to those lying more toward the plain; while in our day the watering-places in the steepest mountains, as in the Black Forest, the Bohemian Mountains, and the Alps, are being sought out on account of their situation. The court physician of Hesse-Cassel, Welcker, in his description of Schlangenbad, which appeared in 1721, describes the place as situated in

a dreary, desolate, forbidding region, in which nothing grows but "leaves and grass," but he adds that by ingeniously planting straight rows and circles of trees carefully pruned with the shears they had at least imparted to the spot some sort of artistic *raison d'être.* Today, on the contrary, Schlangenbad is considered one of the most beautifully situated baths in Germany; the "dreariness" and "desolation" we now call romantic and picturesque, and the fact that in this spot nothing grows but "grass and leaves"—that is to say, that the fragrant meadow-land starts right before the door, and that the green boughs of the forest peep in everywhere at the windows—this perhaps attracts as many guests at present as the efficacy of the mineral spring.

The artists of the Middle Ages thought that they could give no more beautiful background to their historical paintings and half-length portraits than by introducing mountains and rocks of as fantastic and jagged a form as possible, although the latter often contrast strangely enough beside a mild, calmly serene Madonna face, or even beside the likeness of a prosaically respectable commonplace citizen of some free Imperial town. At that time, therefore, savagely broken-up, barren mountain scenery was considered the ideal type of natural scenic beauty, while, a few centuries later, such forms were found much too unpolished and irregular to be considered beautiful at all. Even old historical painters of the Netherlands, who had perhaps never in their lives seen such deeply fissured masses of rock, liked to make use of them in their backgrounds. The rugged mountain-tops in many of the pictures of Memling and Van Eyck certainly never grew in the vicinity of Bruges. This type of natural beauty was therefore established by custom even in countries where it was not indigenous. In a picture by a Low-German artist which depicts the legend of the Eleven Thousand Virgins, the city of Cologne is to be seen in the background surrounded by jagged clusters of rocks. A portrayal, true to nature, of

the flat country did not satisfy the sense of beauty of the artist, who surely knew well enough that Cologne does not lie at the foot of the Alps. On the contrary, if an historical painter of the pigtail age had been obliged to paint the real Alps in the background of an historical painting, he would have rounded them off, leveled them, and smoothed them down as much as possible.

Is it a mere accident that, in the whole long period of landscape painting from Ruysdael almost up to recent times, high mountains have so very seldom formed the subject of important landscape compositions? The eye for natural scenery at that period had turned away from the conceptions of the Middle Ages, and satiated itself with the milder forms of the hills and the plain. Even when an artist like Everdingen presents to us the rocky chasms and waterfalls of Norway he moderates the fantastic forms, and, as far as possible, tries to lend to the northern Alpine world the character of the hills of middle Germany. Joseph Koch, although he was a native of the high Tyrolese Mountains, could not get along half so well with the portrayal of the Alpine world as with that of the classicly proportioned regions of Italy which lay within closer range of the eye for natural scenery of the age; and Ludwig Hess would hardly have come upon his characteristic conception of the Swiss mountains by studying Claude Lorraine and Poussin, if he had not been obliged to climb up to the mountain pastures in order to purchase the cattle to be killed in his father's shambles. On these occasions he reckoned up on one page of his account-book the oxen bought, and on the other side sketched them, together with the meadows, mountains, and glaciers. It was also at this same time when the Romantic School began to pave the way for itself with the historical painters in Munich, that Johann Jakob Dorner abandoned the "heroic" style of landscape, as it was then called, and went over to the "romantic." That is to say, Dorner and his companions, who up to that time had

imitated the forms of Claude Lorraine * as the best possible model, now went off into the high mountains of Bavaria and were the first to reveal once more this wild magnificent nature to the eye for natural scenery of their time, thus preparing the way gradually for a new canon of natural scenic beauty which approached that of the Middle Ages, just as everywhere the modern Romantic School went back to the Middle Ages for inspiration. The Genevese Calame in his Alpine wildernesses typifies so completely the eye for natural scenery of the present day that it is impossible to imagine that these pictures belong to a former age. In the startling contrasts of powerful, often rough, forms and extreme tones, a species of natural beauty is created that has equally little in common with the plastic dignity of a mountain prospect by Poussin or with the quiet peacefulness of a forest thicket by Ruysdael. In what a very different manner from that of Calame was this same Swiss scenery treated by the numerous artists who painted Alpine views at the beginning of this century! They tried almost everywhere to depress the high mountains into hilly country, and they furnish a lanscape commentary to Gessner's Idyls rather than to the gigantic scenery of the Alps as we conceive it at present. Nature, however, has remained the same, and also the outer eye of man; it is the inner eye which has changed.

The older masters, as well as those of today, liked to place themselves below the landscape which they wished to construct, where all the outlines stand out most clearly defined. It had almost grown to be a rule that the foreground should be placed sharply in profile and often so deep in shadow that it contrasted like a silhouette with the more distant grounds. On the other hand, it is a favorite whim of the genuine pigtail age to draw bird's-eye landscapes and views of cities, in which every elevation of the earth seems flat-

* Claude Lorraine himself, who according to tradition is said to have made studies near Munich, did not go into the high mountains, but, quite in keeping with the eye for natural scenery of his time, remained on the plateau.

tened out as much as possible, every distinct division of the separate grounds as much as possible obliterated.

When Goethe was on his return trip from Messina to Naples he wrote at the sight of Scylla and Charybdis: "These two natural curiosities, standing so far apart in reality and placed so close together by the poet, have furnished men with an opportunity to abuse the fables of the bards, not remembering that the human imaginative faculty when it would represent objects as important always imagines them to be higher than they are broad, and thus lends more character, seriousness, and dignity to the picture. I have heard complaints, a thousand times, that an object known only from description no longer satisfies us when we come face to face with it. The cause of this is always the same. Imagination and reality bear the same relation to each other as poetry and prose: The former conceives objects to be huge and precipitous, the latter always thinks that they flatten themselves out. The landscape painters of the sixteenth century, compared with those of our own day, furnish the most striking example of this."

A number of the most pertinent aphorisms might be developed from this short remark. For us this one will suffice: On account of their whole fantastic-romantic ideal of art the medieval painters were forced to make their landscapes steep and rugged and to crowd them within narrow confines. The backgrounds of their landscapes — in the sense of the above remark of Goethe — are composed like poetry rather than like a painting. It is not the portrayal of the earthly, but an imaginary sacred landscape, which stood everywhere so alpine-like before their spirit. This, however, straightway became identified with the actual picture of nature, and determined the eye for natural scenery of the age.

From the biblical poetry of the Hebrews the Christian world (and not only the Germanic) had acquired an enthusiasm for the beauties of nature which could never have been kindled by ancient art. With the deeper Chris-

tian knowledge of God comes also deeper poetic perception of His beautiful earth, and not until man felt with intense pain the transitoriness of this beautiful earth did he begin to love it so ardently. It is therefore a transparent anti-realistic lanscape painting, like that of the Psalmist, which those pious painters give us; it strives after elevated forms for the outer senses also, strives upward, and seeks to gain an insight into an entire world, into a cosmos of concentrated, natural life, the archetype of which — in spite of all childish naturalism — it has seen in the paradise of fancy rather than in reality. The tall luminous mountain peaks, attainable only by the eye, not by the foot, of themselves half belong to heaven. The landscapes of the seventeenth century, on the contrary, which are inspired by earthly beauty pure and simple, have a tendency to flatness, just as in reality all landscapes lie spread out in length and breadth before us. Classical antiquity had just as uncultivated an eye for the beauty of the Alps as the age of Renaissance and the Rococo which emulated it so ardently. Humboldt mentions that not a single Roman author ever alludes to the Alps from a descriptive point of view except to complain of their impassableness and like qualities, and that Julius Cæsar employed the leisure hours of an Alpine journey to complete a dry grammatical treatise, *De Analogia.*

In Bible vignettes of the eighteenth century, Paradise — which is the archetype of the virgin splendor of nature — is depicted as a flat tiresome garden entirely without elevations of any kind, in which the dear God has already begun to correct his own handiwork, and with the shears of a French gardener has carved out from the clumps of trees, straight avenues, pyramids, and the like. In older wood-carvings, on the other hand, Paradise is represented as a gradually rising wilderness where Adam's path is blocked by overhanging masses of rock which contrast strangely with the conception of natural life devoid of all labor and danger. Our fathers often saw in a charming,

rich, and fertile region a picture of Paradise, whereas we are far more likely in a primeval wilderness to exclaim with the medieval masters:

> "The lofty works, uncomprehended,
> Are bright as on the earliest day."

In the landscapes of medieval pictures one scarcely ever sees the woods painted. Can the thin foliage of the trees of the old Italians, which look as though the leaves on them had been counted, be entirely explained by lack of technique? The generation of those days surely had a very different archetype of the intact, uncontaminated splendor of the forest than is possessed by us, for whom there remains scarcely anything but a cultivated forest ravaged by the axe and inclosed within boundaries fixed by rule and measure. The medieval poets felt deeply enough the poetic beauty of the forest, but men saw it with the appreciative eye of the artist only when they had gone away from the forest, when they had become more unfamiliar with it, and the woods themselves had begun to disappear. Thus the peasant in the folk-song knows how to reveal poetically many a tender charm of the beauty of nature; but, on the other hand, he very seldom has an eye for the picturesque beauty of natural scenery. As regards the latter it is with him as with the late Pastor Schmidt of Werneuchen who, when describing in hexameters the spectacle of a barley field to the Berliners, called it "a marvelous view." When the forest was still the rule in Germany and the field the exception, the uprooted parts of the forest, the oases of cleared land, the free open spaces, undoubtedly passed for the most attractive landscapes; whereas we, who have acquired too much of the open, are more attracted by the oases of the forest shade.

Only he who takes this into consideration can understand, for example, how it is possible that the palace of Charlemagne at Ingelheim could have passed for a perfect country-seat, situated in what must have been considered in

those days an extremely charming and picturesque spot. Seen through modern eyes these plains of the left bank of the Rhine with their fields, vineyards, sandy wastes and stunted pine-woods are intensely uninteresting, and one fails to comprehend why an emperor should have chosen Ingelheim as a country-seat, when he needed only to cross the river, or to proceed down stream for a few hours in order to build his palace in a region of imperishable natural beauty. If, however, one takes one's stand on the ruined walls of the imperial abode and looks out over the broad plains of the Rhine valley, which at that time were already cleared land, while the chain of hills along the left bank, which are so monotonous at present, were still covered with woods, then one can estimate to some extent the delight caused by the view spreading before the gaze of the emperor. His castle at the edge of the wood, as it were on the borders of night and old barbarity, looked out upon the open, and under the windows stretched the broad agricultural land of the Rheingau, from whose virgin soil the first vines were just beginning to sprout, adorned with new settlements and roads — surely a royal spectacle for the eye of those days. It was, so to speak, the symbol of the universal historical mission, not only of the emperor but of the entire age — namely, to root up, to clear, to procure light. And thus the same landscape which today is considered, if not exactly commonplace, yet at the most idyllic, may have appeared imposing and imperial to the people of a thousand years ago.

It is because of this varying eye for natural scenery — which is the eye of generations succeeding one another in the course of history — that landscape painting, which conveys to us the most trustworthy information of this variation of vision, does not belong solely to the sphere of the esthetician; the historian of civilization must also study this most subjective of all plastic representations.

It is well known that even the most beautiful region is not in itself a real work of art. Man alone creates artistic-

ally; nature does not. A landscape such as meets our gaze out of doors is not beautiful in itself, it only possesses, possibly, the capability of being spiritualized and refined into beauty in the eye of the spectator. Only in so far is it a work of art as Nature has furnished the raw material for such, while each beholder first fashions it artistically and endows it with a soul in the mirror of his eye. Nature is made beautiful only by the self-deception of the spectator.

Therefore does the peasant ridicule the city man who deceives himself to the extent of becoming enthusiastic over the beauties of a region which leaves the other quite cool. For he who has not something of the artist about him, who cannot paint beautiful landscapes in his head, will never see any outside. Beautiful nature, this most subjective of all works of art, which is painted on the retina of the eye instead of on wood or canvas, will differ every time according to the mental viewpoint of the onlooker; and as it is with individuals so it is with whole generations. The comprehension of the artistically beautiful is not half so dependent upon great cultural presuppositions as the comprehension of the naturally beautiful. With every great evolution of civilization a new "vision" is engendered for a different kind of natural beauty.

This goes so far that one might even be deceived into thinking that the different ages had gazed upon the beauty of nature not only with differing mental eyes but also with a different faculty of seeing. Most of the old masters have painted their landscapes with the eyes of a far-sighted person; we think, as a rule, that we can attain far greater natural truth if we paint our pictures, as it were, from the angle of vision of a near-sighted person. A far-sighted painter will usually be more inclined to paint a plastic landscape, while a near-sighted one would make a mood-picture out of the same scene. The very trees of the old Italians, on which the leaves are numbered, may serve to exemplify this comparison. The scenery of the landscapes of Van Eyck and his pupils is quite often painted as though

the artist had looked at the background through a perspective glass and the foreground through a magnifying one. Jan Breughel paints his charming little landscapes with such detailed precision of outline, especially as regards foliage, he draws in his swarming little figures with such sharp lines, that the whole seems reflected in the eye of an eagle rather than in that of a man. On the other hand we miss the unity and the differentiation of the combined effect — the concentration of large groups, an eye for the landscape as an organic whole. Claude Lorraine and Ruysdael are the first who may be called epoch-making along these lines; they are also, in this sense, the ancestors of modern landscape painting. Where the old masters still counted the leaves, flowers, and blades of grass and laboriously imitated them, we have now adopted broad, general, and, to a certain extent, conventional forms of foliage, meadowland, and the like.

Taken separately, these are far less true to nature than the miniature imitation of detail. Taken collectively, on the other hand, they are far more profoundly true to nature and to art. Do we not at present sometimes see artists who almost seem to consider it their whole life's mission to paint landscapes which have scarcely any definite plastic forms, pure mood-pictures, as, for example, Zwengauer, who is never tired of portraying barren moorlands with some water in the foreground, a shapeless tract of land in the centre, and above the fiery glow of the sunset, which, with a considerable portion of atmosphere growing ever darker and darker, fills up the largest part of the whole picture. It is as though fire, water, air and earth, the four elements as such, were demonstrated before us on the Dachauer moor and combined to form a landscape harmony. For such pictures of mood, pure and simple, the old masters had absolutely no eye. If a painter of the fifteenth or sixteenth century should rise from his grave and gaze upon even our best landscape paintings he would certainly take very little pleasure in them; he would consider them daubs

executed after a recipe according to which one can obtain the most beautiful foliage by throwing a sponge dipped in green paint against the wall.

It is not only the eye for natural scenery which has thus advanced in the last three centuries from the perception of the individual parts to the perception of the whole. We find the same phenomena in the case of historical painters, and no less in that of the poets, musicians, and scholars. A Bach suite, just like a Breughel landscape, has been, as it were, worked out under the microscope, and nowadays it is easier to find a hundred philosophers of history who are capable of constructing history as a "work of art"— exceedingly well on the whole — than one individual chronicler who would lose himself, with the dead leaf-counting diligence of bygone centuries, in endless detail-work. We look not only at landscapes but at the entire world more from the viewpoint of the harmony of the whole than from that of the divergence of the individual parts.

In helping us to gauge the eye for natural scenery of an age, the really artistic portrayals are often far less accurate than the fashionable articles manufactured, as it were, by the artistic handicraftsman, for the latter best disclose to us the eye of the entire public. Hence, for example, the popular passion for Rhine landscapes, Swiss pictures, Italian views, etc., mechanically executed after a fixed model — which periodically breaks forth only to vanish again — is more important for us in this respect than the conception of many a leader of genius in the art of landscape-painting, who may perhaps set the tone for the future but seldom for the present. There exist special directions for making a Rhine landscape and for infallibly bestowing upon it the genuine coloring of the Rhine, which appeared in the book-market about a hundred and fifty years ago, side by side with directions for preparing the best vinegar, the best sealing-wax, etc.— I do not know whether it was also sealed up as a secret recipe, as they were. By genuine Rhine coloring was meant that sentimental, mistily indis-

tinct tone in the dullest possible half tints formerly so much in vogue. The fact that such a booklet could be written and sold with profit affords us instructive hints regarding the eye of the multitude for natural scenery in those days, and the tone of that infallible Rhine coloring is, in its way, also a color-tone of the age. Nowadays, when Alpine landscapes are painted even on the rough stones from the Alpine rivers (for paper-weights), it would be very easy to write out a recipe for genuine mountain coloring. Mountain peaks, rugged as possible, painted in thick Venetian white, must detach themselves from a sky of almost pure Berlin blue; with these again contrasts a centre-ground partly composed of clumps of dark green fir-trees and partly of a poisonous yellow-green meadow; finally the rocks of the foreground must be painted in glaring ochre tones, just as they are squeezed out of the paint tube. Such factory goods are, for the historian of culture, just as necessary a supplement to Zimmermann and Schirmer and Calame as that "genuine Rhine coloring" is to Koch and Rheinhard, to Schuetz and Reinermann.

Let us linger a moment longer in the region of the Rhine, which was in Germany, for nearly two centuries, the subject of the most salable landscape fancy articles. In the seventeenth century it was already a sort of industry to turn out mechanically so-called "Rhine rivers." In the same way that we now reproduce Rhine scenes on plates, cups, tin-ware and pocket-handkerchiefs, in those days folding-screens, fire-places, bay-windows, even door-cases, but more especially the space over the doorway (though the latter were executed in the fresco style of the cooper), were decorated with "Rhine rivers." But these "Rhine rivers" are totally unlike those which the manufacturers of views of the Rhine furnish us with today. The eye revealed by the one is very different from that which we find in the other; at the most they have the water in common. In the old "Rhine rivers" there are, for the most part, rounded-off mountainous formations, whereas we now make the

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AT THE SICK BED

BENJAMIN VAUTIER

angularity of the real Rhine mountains still more angular if possible; the castles, as indicative of a too barbaric taste, are often omitted or changed into a sort of Roman ruin; the portrayal is so free that it ceases to be a portrait, and yet they believed that they had adhered all the more strictly to the peculiar motive of Rhine scenery. The most lively activity of men and animals, ships and rafts, and all sorts of land conveyances, formed the principal ornament; there had to be a sort of antlike swarming to and fro on a river Rhine of this description if it was to be considered really beautiful. In Saftleewen's views of the Rhine this fondness is already discernible. Although in his pictures there is still evidence of a very clear eye for mountainous formation and the architectonic adornment of the region, yet the monotonous, unnaturally tender and misty coloring indicates the effort to soften and equalize the contrast of forms, while life is introduced into the landscape only by means of the immeasurably rich accessories which make every rock, every valley, and especially the entire river, swarm with people. These are, in truth, cultural landscapes, in which we perceive the greatest charm of the region to lie in the pathway of human work, just as the whole age in which they were painted longed to get away from the devastation of the Thirty Years' War into the crowded activity of work and festive pleasures, which, however, were far less apt to be found on the real Rhine than on the painted "Rhine rivers" of the seventeenth century. Johannes Griffier affords us an even clearer idea than Saftleewen of the model pictures of the mechanical old "Rhine rivers." Griffier paints from imagination an idyllic river valley, adorned with Roman ruins such as never stood on the Rhine, animated by all kinds of jolly people, such as it would have been hard, in that day, to find gathered in our devastated provinces. That was then dubbed a river Rhine. Griffier, however, certainly believed that he had beheld the genuine scenery of the Rhine; he did not laboriously evolve his pictures shut up in a room, but painted his imaginative

pieces in a skiff, direct from nature. And it really was the actual Rhine that he saw, only he looked at it with the idealistic eye of the seventeenth century.

If one confronts productions of this kind with the later works of a Schuetz or Reinermann which treat of the same subject, and then again compares both with our modern views of the Rhine, one can often scarcely comprehend how even the same character of scenery is supposed to be reproduced in these widely differing conceptions, much less the identically same landscape. While in Saftleewen, for example, we always see the Rhine country veiled in a soft mist, seventy years ago it was accounted as a merit of the elder Schuetz that he always gave his pictures of the Rhine and the Main the clearest possible air, and that there was never a trace of mist in the atmosphere! Let us now compare both of these conceptions with the Rhine views executed in the modern style of a steel engraving, with their heavy, tropically stormy sky, dark masses of clouds, between which thick dazzling streams of light break forth, and similar violent light-effects. One might think that sun, air, and clouds, water and mountains and trees and rocks, had altered in the course of the centuries, that nature itself had been transformed, if we did not know only too well that it is the eye of man alone which has altered in the mean time, that every generation *sees* in a different style.

The masters of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries looked at natural scenery in a very much more objective manner than we do. Wherever there is bright springtime or summer, wherever all the trees are green and the flowers blooming, wherever the cloudless sky is glittering in deepest blue, and all forms stand out detached from one another in the luminous clearness of the full, joyous, midday sunlight — there for them is genuinely beautiful natural scenery. It was not lack of technique that prevented the artists of that period from painting faded yellow autumn pictures, or thunder-storms and rain landscapes as we do. With regard to more difficult points they were technically so far

advanced that they could surely have produced a gray sky instead of a blue, and yellow-red trees instead of green, if they had seriously tried to do so. But with their far brighter eyes they saw the landscape far brighter than we do, and therefore, of necessity, they painted it so. Whoever compares medieval lyrics, where the same sunny, springlike tone plays through all the verses, with modern lyrics, will become more deeply conscious of this necessity.

And as those men found their calm nature reflected in the midday clearness of the most peaceful of spring days, so it is necessary for us to seek the mirror of our own passionate agitation in the pathos of the stormy, mournful, autumnally decaying, desolate, savage landscape. They therefore really painted pictures of mood just as we do. Only they strove, as it were, to preserve the most general elemental mood of natural beauty, while we strain ourselves in depicting individual changeable moods. Do we not actually see at present stage-scenery painted like sentimental mood-pictures, trees in the foreground, for example, on whose deformed greenish-brown foliage an elegiac late-autumnal tinge rests? And these are shoved into position regularly each evening for every dialogue scene, and every light comic situation — a satire on the inner eye of our time. In a German metropolis of art one can even see sign-boards of sausage manufacturers on which sausages, hams, salted spare-ribs and swards are appetizingly painted with brilliant technique; and they too are conceived like mood-pictures, since that soft melancholy mist, with which our landscape painters are so fond of coquetting, spreads likewise over these sausages and hams, almost making them look as though they had all grown moldy. That is another indication of the eye for natural scenery of our time.

Change of styles that great masters had made conventional, the degeneration and progress of technique, etc., play a large part, to be sure, in all these things, with and beside the changing eye. How much, however, essentially depends upon the latter we can notice very plainly when the ques-

tion is one of architectural landscapes and, in general, of the portrayal of old works of sculpture and architecture, which men have seen very differently in different ages and represented accordingly, while the originals have, in truth, remained the same throughout the centuries.

The purest Gothic architecture portrayed in the pigtail age nearly always has a pigtail look. The ornamentation of leaves and vines, executed in accordance with the laws of organic necessity, becomes, without the draughtsman being aware of it, an arbitrarily curved rococo scroll; the proportions, which in reality soar upward, spread out in width, so that one might think it possible for the eyesight to change also, and yet in the building itself perhaps not a stone has been disturbed since its erection; the pigtail surely did not transport itself into the original—it existed only in the eye of the copyist. The views of cities and buildings furnish the most striking examples of this, for in them we can see how these additions have been made, in woodcut, to the numerous topographical works of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Almost every medieval tower here bears the stamp of the Renaissance, every pointed arch is, if possible, compressed into a Roman arch, so firmly implanted were these new forms in the eye and hand of the people of that time. For even in an external sense men no longer possessed an organ for the old lines. Peter Neefs, the celebrated architectural painter of this age, did indeed stand on such a high plane of art and technique that he reproduced the perspectives of his Gothic churches absolutely correctly. He had in this particular preserved the objectivity of the artistic eye which is absolutely lacking in the mechanical works mentioned above; nevertheless, even here, he shows himself to be the child of his age. For example, he almost always paints the interiors of his Gothic cathedrals on broad canvases of insignificant height, which causes the pointed arches and vaulted structures of the foreground to be cut off at the top. In spite of the mathematically correct drawing the general plan of the pic-

ture therefore reveals that the age of Peter Neefs no longer had a correct eye for the principle, for the spirit, of the Gothic, otherwise the master would not have cut off precisely the characteristic terminations of the columns and vaultings by the arbitrary horizontal line of the frame. Thus, in very truth, Neefs paints rigid Gothic, but in his pictures we can recognize the seventeenth century which, at the most, could see the medieval forms correctly with the outer but not with the inner eye.

All the outlines of the ancient statues swell up under the pencil of the draughtsman of that day, every muscle becomes coarser, fuller, more fleshy, although the draughtsman undoubtedly believed he had reproduced it with mathematical exactitude. The Grecian goddess no longer looks so demure. She has grown to be a coquette; the Virgin has become a wife, because the age lacked the virgin eye, because Rubens' full-bosomed women's figures and Buonarotti's swelling play of the muscles obtruded themselves everywhere, not only before the creative vision but also before the inner receptive vision. Mignon, at that time, painted flowers preferably in the stage of their most fully developed splendor, and fruits succulently ripe to bursting; he despised closed buds. This is something more than a mere fancy of this particular master; it is a token of the eye of the whole generation, which was dull as regards the beauty of buds, not only in the flower-piece but in all subjects of the plastic arts.

This changing play of " vision " takes place everywhere that beauty meets the gaze, but principally in the case of the beautiful in nature, because this, as such, must first be conceived by the vision. The eye for the beautiful in art remains more constant in comparison.

In youth one has a totally different eye for natural scenery than in old age. This is the reason why we often feel greatly disappointed when we behold a familiar region after a long time. There is no more thankless task than to try to convince another of the beauty of natural scenery.

One tries, as it were, to implant in him one's own eye — an effort which rarely succeeds. So it is, furthermore, the business of the landscape painter to implant his own eye for natural scenery in every one who looks upon his pictures, in such a manner that the latter shall get out of the landscape the same beauties which the eye of the artist put into it. If he succeeds in this, one must at least concede that he has worked clearly, logically, and conscious of his effects.

The eye for natural scenery is never an absolute one, and if out of ten generations each one finds the primitive canon of natural beauty in something different, then none is entirely right and none entirely wrong. This uncertainty of the eye for natural scenery might drive a painter crazy if he should insist upon knowing definitely, once for all, whether the succeeding century would not perhaps have just as good a right to laugh at his ideal of the beautiful in nature as we have to laugh at the preferences for natural scenery of the two preceding generations. He might then, in consideration of the tremendous fluctuations in the conception of the beautiful in nature, lose confidence in his own eyes to such an extent that at last he would no longer have any guarantee to assure him that the mountain which he is drawing as a rounded knoll is not perhaps, in reality, pointed and jagged, while the roundish outline merely holds his eyes captive, as it did those of the painters of the pigtail.

If, however, the eye for natural scenery only sees *bona fide,* as the jurists say, then it follows that it saw correctly for its age.

Whether our grandchildren will laugh at us because we saw thus and not otherwise need not disturb our peace of mind, for no present has any kind of guarantee that it will not be laughed at by the immediate future.

THE MUSICAL EAR* (1852)

By W. H. Riehl

TRANSLATED BY FRANCES H. KING

THE North German pitch differs in general from the South German—I mean the orchestral pitch.

The Vienese pitch is the highest in Germany. They go still higher, however, in St. Petersburg; the pitch in which they play on the Neva is the highest in the whole of Europe. The climax of the European concert-pitch of the present day may be represented in its three principal degrees by the orchestral tone of the three capitals—Paris, Vienna, St. Petersburg—ascending from the lowest pitch to the highest. There is no German concert-pitch, but there are dozens of different German concert-pitches—a Viennese, a Berlin, a Dresden, a Frankfurt pitch, etc., so that in the light of such distinctions even the above-mentioned division into northern and southern tone appears like a very general hypothesis. The Parisian pitch and the French pitch, on the contrary, are accepted without caviling as synonymous.† Italy, on the other hand, is also without a uniform pitch; as early as a hundred years ago a distinction was made there between the Roman, the Venetian, the Lombard pitch, ascending from the lower to the higher. It may therefore be said that in Rome they play approximately in the Parisian pitch, in upper Italy in the Viennese and St. Petersburg pitch. I am not indulging in any political metaphors, but in sober musical truth.

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* From *Studies in the Culture of Three Centuries.*

† France centralizes in this respect also and at present (1858) a council is being called together in Paris to reëstablish the catholicity of European orchestral pitch.

Is it possible, however, that this variety of musical tone, the historical roots of which extend back so far, may be something arbitrary and accidental? The very usage of the German language lends a significant double meaning to the word *Stimmung* (pitch, tone. mood). It stamps with the same name, on the one hand, the given basis upon which are built up the harmonies of music and, on the other, the harmonies of emotional life.

It is one of the most fascinating, but at the same time most difficult tasks of the history of culture to catch, as it were, the personal emotions, the pitch upon which each generation is based, in distinction from the perception of the outspoken deeds and thoughts of the age.

This task would be incapable of solution if the history of art did not furnish us a key to it. I have already shown in the preceding essay on the *Eye for Natural Scenery,* that the question does not concern the historical appreciation of the work of art as such, so much as the investigation of the special manner in which a generation has perceived and enjoyed the beautiful. And indeed this is more easily discerned in the case of the most fluid, subjective species of the beautiful, in natural beauty, than in the more objective artistic beauty.

In art, however, musical beauty comes closest to natural beauty, since it is in its turn the most subjective, the most general in its expression, and the most versatile in its forms. The phenomenon, so important from the point of the history of culture, namely, that each age sees with its own eyes and hears with its own ears, can therefore nowhere be more sharply observed than in the conception of natural beauty and in the fundamental forms of musical expression which happen to prevail for the time being. I will speak, therefore, of these fundamental forms and not of musical works of art, for by means of what one might call, by way of comparison, musical natural beauty, by means of the prototypes of the high or low tones, of tone-color, of time, of rhythm, etc., we can test most clearly the

unconscious transformation of the musical ear in contrast to the conscious development of artistic taste.

Let us compare the orchestral pitch of the eighteenth with that of the nineteenth century. As the peoples of Europe became more passionate and agitated in public and in private life, and as our whole intellectual life rose to a higher level, our orchestral tone was keyed up higher. In 1739 Euler reckoned the vibrations of the great eight-foot C to be one hundred and eighteen to the second. In 1776, Marpurg, for the same tone, gives one hundred and twenty-five vibrations. Chladni, in the year 1802, calculated its vibrations as a hundred and twenty-eight, twenty years later as a hundred and thirty-six to a hundred and thirty-eight to the second. And since then we have, no doubt, gone noticeably higher!

We find, then, that the tone has risen most emphatically since the appearance of the Romanticists; in the days of the Classical School it remained the same for the greatest length of time. The latter was the period of the most moderate artistic expression. At present, on the contrary, we thirst for shriller and shriller tones, higher and higher singing. Even though every violin treble-string snaps and every singer's throat becomes exhausted before its time, we go on forcing the tone higher from decade to decade.

The entirely reversed relation of church-pitch to concert-pitch, which has taken place in the course of time, appears noteworthy in this connection. Even in the eighteenth century, church-pitch was much higher than concert-pitch, and surely for a reason far deeper than the mere wish to save tin on the organ pipes. For the old masters used church music for the portrayal of strong emotions, and on this account they needed the shriller pitch. Bach is much more shrilly and characteristically dramatic in his church cantatas than contemporary masters of Italian opera. Chamber and theatrical music, for which the lower, milder, more agreeable orchestral tone was chosen, was

played, for the most part, only with the semblance of emotion. When Gluck and Mozart transported tragedy from the church to the stage and concert hall, concert-pitch naturally had to assume the rôle of church-pitch, and thus the former has in fact gradually become higher than the latter.

There is still another fact connected with this. Händel's operas seem to us concert-like; the arias of Bach's church cantatas often appear operatic. Many numbers of these cantatas would disturb us today in church; on the other hand we consider them exquisite religious parlor music — which they were far from being in Bach's day. We are no longer such a vehemently excitable generation religiously as to be able to endure Bach's music to its full extent in church; on the other hand, as individuals, in the family, in society we are infinitely more vehemently excitable and much higher tuned spiritually as well than were those of the eighteenth century; we want Bach in the concert hall and in the parlor. The pious and yet forcible leader of St. Thomas' Choir has been made a parlor musician by us and for us — but for his own generation he was not one.

In the last hundred years the compass of pitch of almost all instruments has been considerably enlarged in the treble. The high registers in which every ordinary violinist must be able to play nowadays would in those days have seemed too break-neck for the foremost virtuosos. Men themselves were not tuned high enough to take pleasure in such poignant chirping. The flute of the seventeenth century was a fourth lower than that of the eighteenth. In the flute and the piccolo of the nineteenth century we have again risen a third, yes, an entire octave above the eighteenth century! Our great-grandfathers called the bass flute *flauto d'amore,* the alto oboe, *oboe d'amore,* a bass viol, *viola d'amore,* because their ear found preferably in the deep middle tones the character of the tender, the sweet, and the languishing. Now we can scarcely play on the violin or wind instrument a love melody which does not rise two or three octaves above the normal.

The standard Italian song-composers of the first half of the last century were especially fond of using the middle register for tones expressive of peculiarly dramatic pathos, as well as for powerful final passages of arias. Our differently tuned ear demands that these tones of passion shall, as a rule, be as high as possible. The alto voice as a solo voice has almost entirely disappeared from the operas in which it formerly played so conspicuous a part. The elevated tone of our whole inner man has deprived us of any ear for the alto.

In any case we have here reached an extreme which is contrary to the very construction of the human vocal organs. Scarcely is moderate and natural compass of tone still permitted, even in a song. In every age the song-composer had been allowed to construct his melodies out of the fewest possible tones. While the elder Bach in his arias often chases the human voice in the most ruthless manner from one extreme to the other, his sons and pupils in their little German songs confine themselves to the most modest compass. Most of the later composers proceeded in the same way up to the time of the Romanticists; then the bonds were snapped, even in this respect. Schubert, on the one hand, could compose the most moderate songs, on the other, the most immoderate. It often seems (and this is also the case with Beethoven) that his fantasy rebelled against the fact that a curb was placed upon it by the natural limitation of the human voice.

This natural limitation, however, is once for all not to be done away with, and it is ignored only at the expense of feasibility. Some later Romanticists, therefore, such as Spohr and Mendelssohn, came back immediately to the comfortable middle register as the real vocal register of song. The thirst for shrill sounds had made men entirely forget that a song must be easy to sing just because it must always be sung suggestively and never be delivered with full dramatic execution. Do not our singers, who since Schubert's time are so fond of making a song a dramatic scene, feel how

ridiculous it would be if a reader should declaim a song at the top of his voice like the dialogue of a drama?

In the invaluable privilege of writing for a moderate compass, a song-composer, almost alone of all composers, is provided with a means of reacting gradually upon instrumental music and of tuning anew the ear of our generation, so that it shall no longer find satisfaction in the shrill tones of extreme voice registers and the euphony of strong, easily and comfortably attained middle tones shall again be universally perceived. At the present moment our instrumental art has, in this particular, fallen under the tyranny of piano manufacturers and makers of wind instruments. When the keyboard of the grand piano has been made longer by a few keys, the composers think they are remaining "behind the times" if they do not immediately introduce these new high treble tones into their next work, and when the wind instruments have been enriched by several new valves and regulators the scores immediately grow in proportion to these keys and pistons. But does art feel no shame at having thus fallen under the dominion of trade?

The ear of the eighteenth century preferred human voices whose *timbre* approached closest to the violin, the oboe or the 'cello, and considered that such were peculiarly fitted for lyric and dramatic expression. The eunuch sings as if he had an oboe in his throat; it is much too harsh and lacking in brilliancy for our ear, which values incomparably higher the more brilliant, clearer *timbre,* corresponding to the tone of the flute, clarinet, or horn. The favorite *timbre* of the eighteenth century compares with that of the nineteenth as dull oxidized gold does with that brightly polished. The period of the Romanticists marks here too the turning-point of taste; Beethoven completed the emancipation of the above-mentioned wind instruments in the symphony. The modern treatment of the piano with the introduction of the perfect chord accelerated its victory at the same time. It worked favorably for the external bril-

liancy of tone of this instrument, while gradually closing the ears of the dilettante and the musician to the charms of a simple but characteristic management of the voice in accordance with the rules of counterpoint. Thus the layman nowadays has seldom an ear for the subtleties of the string quartet, whereas, on the other hand, our great-grandfathers would indubitably have run away from the sound of our brass bands and military music. The earlier symphonies, since they were essentially intended to bring out the effects of the stringed instruments, now seem like darkened pictures. Yet the symphonies have certainly remained unchanged; only our ear has grown dull so far as comprehension of the tone-color of the string quartet is concerned. The same full orchestra, which in those works sounded so overpoweringly imposing seventy years ago, now sounds to us simply powerful. In such symphonies, in order to sharpen our ears, which have become dulled in this respect, we have arrived at the strange necessity of doubling the parts of the stringed instruments in a simple wind instrument *ensemble,* so as to attain the same effect which old masters attained with a simple distribution of the string parts.

The characterization of musical keys is very strange. In different ages an entirely different capacity of expression, often an exactly opposite color, has been attributed to each separate key. In the eighteenth century G-major was still a brilliant, ingratiating, voluptuous key — indeed, in the seventeenth century, Athanasius Kircher goes so far as to call it *tonum voluptuosum.* We, on the contrary, consider G-major particularly modest, naïve, harmless, faintly-colored, simple, even trivial. Aristotle ascribes to the Dorian key, which corresponds approximately to our D-minor, the expression of dignity and constancy; five hundred years later Athaenæus also calls this key manly, magnificent, majestic. D-minor, therefore, had for the ear of the ancient world about the same character that C-major has for us. That is indeed a jump *a dorio ad phrygium.*

What, however, was for the ancients not proverbially, but literally, a jump *a dorio ad phrygium* — namely, the contrast between D-minor and E-minor — is for us no longer such a very astonishing antithesis. In the seventeenth century Prinz finds the same Dorian key — which for Aristotle bore the stamp of dignity and constancy — as D-minor, not only "grave" but also "lively and joyous, reverent and temperate." This key conveys to Kircher's ear the impression of strength and energy. For Matheson it possesses "a pious, quiet, large, agreeable and contented quality," which encourages devotion and peace of mind, and, for that matter, may also be employed to express pleasure. On the other hand, since Ch. P. Schubert's theoretical procedure and since the use Gluck and Mozart have made of D-minor in dramatic practice, the modern esthetic critic finds the stamp of womanly melancholy, dark brooding, deep anxiety, in the selfsame key which for a former age was the *tonus primus*, the one particularly expressive of manly dignity and strength. And, to cap the climax, the ear of the musical Romanticist of our day has become quite accustomed also to hear in D-minor devilish rage and revengeful fury, as well as all sorts of demoniacal terror and dreadful, midnight, musical vampirism, as, for example, we find the Queen of Night giving vent in D-minor to the "hellish revenge" which boils in her heart, and in the *Freischütz* hell triumphs in D-minor. In the seventeenth century, Sethus Calvisius, speaking of C-major, the Ionian key, says it was formerly a favorite key for love songs and therefore had acquired the reputation of being a somewhat wanton and lewd melody; in his day, on the contrary, it resounded clear, warlike, and was used to lead the warriors in battle. The victoriously joyful battle hymn of the Protestant church, "A mighty fortress is our God," is therefore in the Ionian key. Calvisius himself is, however, puzzled at this incredible transformation in the conception of the selfsame thing, and adds that one is almost inclined to suspect that what is now known as the Ionian key was formerly

called the Phrygian, and *vice versa*. The fact is, however, that the names have not changed — it is the ear which has changed. If before Calvisius C-major was the erotic key, in the seventeenth century G-major was considered so; in the eighteenth, on the contrary, when love poetry jumps from the merry and playful over to the sentimental, the musical ear likewise altered accordingly, and even before the time of Werther and Siegwart the languishing, gently melancholy G-minor was the fashionable tone, for the erotic Matheson, indeed, even goes so far as to declare that it is the "most beautiful of tones" — an opinion which is certainly characteristic of the state of nerves of the world of culture at that day. We have outgrown this tearful, tender love melody and now consider A-major to be a key especially appropriate for the love song; and already we find Don Juan declaring his love to Zerlina in A-major.

Since the days of the Romanticists, since Beethoven, our ear, in the conception of the keys also, has decidedly turned away from the more simple and natural toward the more eccentric. In the keys C-, G-, D-, F-, B- and E-flat major the eighteenth century still found characteristic peculiarities which we are scarcely able to hear at present; to the over-irritated modern ear these simple keys sound flat, colorless, and empty; instead, we have dug our way deeper and deeper among the out-of-the-way keys, and melodies which our fathers made use of only to produce the rarest and strongest emotions have already become the daily bread of our composers.

One can, in the end, escape from this chaos of differing ears only if one accedes to the opinion of old Quantz, the flute teacher of Frederick the Great, who, after an exhaustive argument for and against, comes to the conclusion that in theory nothing can be definitely decided concerning the characters of the keys; in practice, however, the composer is sure to feel that everything does not sound equally well in all keys and therefore must decide each individual case separately, in conformity with his artistic ear and

instinct; I will merely add — also in conformity with the ear of his time. For Quantz, by declining to make a theoretical decision, shows that his ear had fallen captive to the Italian musical school which strove not so much to hear the characteristic in music as the simply beautiful, and, indifferent to the prevailing lively controversy over the keys, composed its melodies as was most convenient for the voice of the singer and the fingers of the accompanist.

In the first half of the eighteenth century people still possessed a very keen ear for dance music. The great majority of the dance melodies of that time are moderately animated. To our modern ear and pulse-beat, on the contrary, slow dance music seems to be a contradiction in itself; a melody which in those days inspired people and started their feet to dancing would now lull us to sleep. We desire stormily exciting dance music; our ancestors gave the preference to the gayly stimulating kind. How entirely differently constituted, how differently qualified historically, politically, and socially, was that generation in whose ears sounded the dance rhythm of the majestic *sarabande*, the solemnly animated *entrée*, *loure*, and *chaconne*, the delicate pastoral *musette*, the staid gliding *siciliano*, and the measured, graceful minuet, compared to a generation who dance the whirling waltz, the stormy skipping *galop*, and the furious *cancan!* In the opera the tragic hero could dance a *sarabande*, and even in choral songs of the church the ear of the eighteenth century could distinguish dance music. Mattheson made (1739) out of the choral song "When we are in dire distress" a very danceable minuet; out of "How beautifully upon us shines the morning star" a *gavotte;* out of "Lord Jesus Christ, thou greatest gift" a *sarabande;* out of "Be joyful, my soul" a *burrée;* and finally out of "I call to Thee, Lord Jesus Christ" a *polonaise*, by preserving the choral melodies note for note and only changing the rhythm, just exactly in the same way as we now make marches, waltzes, and polkas out of operatic arias. What colossal contrasts of the musical ear in the

course of a single century! In them is marked not only a revolution of artistic development, but a much greater revolution of the entire system of social ethics.

In several musical authors of the first decade of the last century we find the remark that the fashionable taste in music had at that time suddenly veered around; a short time before, the greatest effects had been produced with the fastest possible tempo, the most animated rhythm and figures; now slow, solemn music was the order of the day. In the seventeenth century the twelve-eighths time was mainly employed for dance music and, in general, for quick movements; in the beginning of the eighteenth century, on the contrary, this species of time conveyed to people's ears something quite different; it then became the conventional measure for the soft, yearning *adagio*. Händel, in his lively *gigs* and in his lingering pastoral love arias, gives us side by side both conceptions of twelve-eighths time. In the second half of the century this species of time, so much in vogue formerly, disappears almost entirely. Generally speaking, in the period of Haydn the sense of rhythm undergoes a simplifying process, and many species of time are done away with altogether. There is, in this particular, no greater contrast than Haydn and Sebastian Bach. Haydn generalizes the rhythms in order to attain the most telling and universally comprehensible effect possible; Bach individualizes them in order to get the most subtle result possible. Haydn and his age were satisfied, in the main, with the four-fourths and two-fourths, three-fourths and six-eighths rhythm; he simplified all conceivable rhythmic forms in such a manner that it was possible to express them in one of these four rhythms. Bach employs at least three times as many species of time and is so hair-splitting in his selections that it is more often a question of a refinement of designation, of professional coquetting with the master secrets of technique, than of any real difference in the matter. Only it must be said that this, with him, springs from a feeling for the most delicate shades of

rhythm, such as has never existed since. The ear of the whole Bach age had a much keener appreciation than ours, of the subtleties of rhythm. At that time, in order to distinguish in the ball-room whether a *courante* or a minuet, whether a *gavotte* or a *bourrée*, were being played, a keenness of rhythmic instinct was necessary, of which in truth very little has survived in our young dancing people of today, who often have to bethink themselves whether it is a waltz or a polka which the music is beating in their ears with the rhythmic flail.

In the first decades of our century an ear for fine rhythmic *nuances* of dance music scarcely existed any longer, while at the same time, in concert-music, a greater wealth of rhythm was developing. Never were people inspired by more rhythmically flat dance tunes than those of the waltzes, schottisches, etc., which, for example, were danced in the twenties. The ear for the fine shades of "danceableness" in musical rhythm had at that time become absolutely dulled and had fallen asleep; now it is perceptibly awakening once more. Our polkas, mazurkas, etc., based on the clearly defined original rhythm of the national folk-dances, are promising harbingers of this. But is there not an important hint for the historian of culture in the fact that the sense for the finer dance rhythms began to die out at the time of the French revolution and was most completely extinguished in the rough days of the Napoleonic tempest and the decade immediately following, whereas in the age of Louis XIV. the ear for the subtleties of dance rhythm appears to have been most universally and most highly developed? And with the newly awakening delight in the *rococo* the modern ear is again becoming perceptibly keener as regards the *nuances* of dance rhythms.

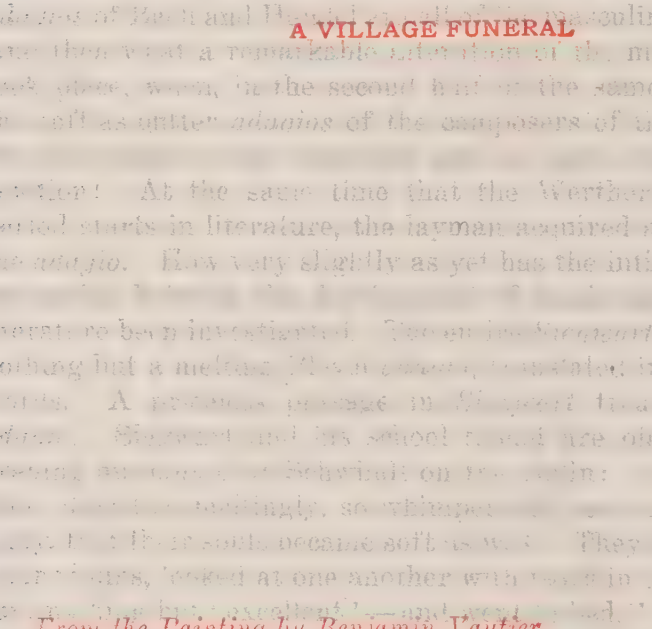
We have grown quicker in tempo in exactly the same proportion as we have become more elevated in pitch. We live twice as quickly as the eighteenth century, and therefore our music is performed twice as quickly. Most of our musicians can no longer play even a Haydn minuet because

they no longer have an ear or a pulse for the comfortable moderate movement of these compositions. The calm, easy-going *andante*, in which our classical age portrayed many of its clearest and purest musical pictures, is a tempo absolutely tabooed by modern Romanticists. *Comodo, comodamente*, i. e., comfortably, was, a hundred years ago, a very favorite designation for the manner of performing individual musical compositions. This superscription has quite disappeared from circulation in our day, and we are much more apt to mount up to the *furioso* than to remain quietly behind with the *comodo*. The old masters also had a species of composition with the superscription "*Furia*," but their fury was not to be taken very seriously, for the *furia* was a dance. The French in former times considered the very slow trill to be especially beautiful. This kind of trill sounds to us amateurishly ridiculous, while, on the contrary, the most admired rapid trills of our best singers of today would probably have been called "false shakes" a hundred and fifty years ago. Incidentally it may be remarked that two hundred years ago people actually took pleasure in trilling with the third instead of with the second; this, in the eighteenth century, was only adhered to by bagpipers, while to our ear it has become an absolute abomination and barbarity.

A hundred years ago it was considered very daring to perform an *adagio* before the public in a concert hall. Contemporary musical authors utter emphatic warnings against this experiment. A sustained, seriously melancholy composition, dying away in quiet passion, was naturally just as tiresome for the opulent merry company of those days as a fugue composition is for the majority of our public. People sought to be pleasantly incited by music, not thrillingly excited; therefore comfortable slow tempo was demanded, but no *adagio*. If one did attempt an *adagio* in a gallant style of composition the player first had to render it lively and amusing by all sorts of freely added adornments, by means of passages and cadences, by improvised

trills, *gruppettos*, *pincements*, *battements*, *flattements*, *doublés*, etc. "In the *adagio*," says Quantz, speaking of the mode of execution, "each note must be, as it were, caressed." In the execution of our heroic *adagios* it is rather required that each note shall be maltreated. From the viewpoint of the historian of culture it is an important fact that the first half of the eighteenth century had not yet acquired an ear for the sentimental, feminine *adagio*. The *adagios* of Bach and Händel are all of the masculine gender. And then what a remarkable alteration of the musical ear took place, when, in the second half of the same century, the soft-as-butter *adagios* of the composers of the day all at once caused every beautiful soul to melt with tender emotion! At the same time that the Werther-Siegwart period starts in literature, the layman acquired an ear for the *adagio*. How very slightly as yet has the intimate concatenation between the development of music and that of literature been investigated. The entire *Siegwart* is indeed nothing but a melting Pleyel *adagio*, translated into windy words. A priceless passage in *Siegwart* treats of the *adagio*. Siegwart and his school friend are playing one evening an *adagio* of Schwindl on the violin: "And now they played so meltingly, so whimperingly and so lamentingly, that their souls became soft as wax. They laid down their violins, looked at one another with tears in their eyes, said nothing but 'excellent'—and went to bed." The ear of the sentimental period, which had so suddenly become sensitive to the *adagio*, has never been so tersely branded! From that time on there was a regular debauch of *adagio* beatitude. In the time of Jean Paul they wrote as a maxim in autograph albums that a bad man could not play an *adagio*, not to mention other florid trash of this sort. Nevertheless, the moment when we acquired an ear for the *adagio* remains epoch-making in the history of culture.

It is not strange that, in harmony, much that formed surprising contrasts for our ancestors should, on the contrary, cause us very little surprise, or rather should appear trivial



A VILLAGE FUNERAL

From the Painting by Benjamin Vautier

to us. But that combinations of harmony should sound absolutely false and nonsensical to the ear of one generation, which to the ear of another age sounded beautiful and natural — this is a puzzling fact. The shrill and unprepared dissonances which we now often consider very effective were thought to be ear-splitting a hundred years ago. But let us go still further. The awful succession of fourths in the diaphonies of Guido of Arezzo, in the eleventh century, are so incongruous to our ear that expert singers must exercise the utmost self-control in order even to give utterance to such combinations of harmony — and yet they must have sounded beautiful and natural to the medieval ear! Even dogs, which listen quietly to modern third and sixth passages, begin to howl lamentably if one plays before them on the violin the barbaric fourth passages of the Guido diaphonies! This historically verified alternation of the musical ear is indeed incomprehensible. It may serve, however, to help us to divine how horribly medieval dogs would have howled if one had been able to play to them — well, let us say, modulations from *Tannhäuser*.

The concert music of the first half of the eighteenth century was *in its trivial entirety* a "diversion of the mind and wit." In the same way that we now write "popular musical text-books," they wrote, in that day, directions "how a *galant homme* could attain complete comprehension of and taste in music," and Matheson says, not satirically, but in earnest: "Formerly only two things were demanded of a composition, namely, melody and harmony; but nowadays one would come off badly if one did not add the third thing, namely, gallantry, which, however, can in no wise be learned or set down in rules but is acquired only by good taste and sound judgment. If one wished for an example, and were the reader perhaps not gallant enough to understand what gallantry means in music, it might not come amiss to use that of a dress, in which the cloth could represent the so necessary harmony, the style, the suitable melody, and then perhaps the embroidery might represent the gallantry."

With such tailor-like artistic taste prevalent in the gallant world of that day, it is all the more astonishing that a solitary great spirit like Sebastian Bach dared to develop his best thoughts and most peculiar forms also in concert music. To be sure, as a natural consequence he had to remain solitary.

The above mentioned music "for the diversion of the mind and wit" loved short pieces, concise composition, minor measures, frequent repetitions of the same thought. The intellectual ear grasps all that easily, and amuses itself with the comparison of themes which are repeated in the same or in changed forms. We, on the contrary, nearly always listen to music with a dreamy, seldom with an intellectually comparative ear; therefore modern music is much more influential, but also much more dangerous, than the old. Musical pieces increase in length from year to year, in order that, during the performance of them, one may have the requisite time to dream. The composition has become infinitely more complicated. Formerly four measures sufficed for a simple melodic phrase, then six, then eight, now twelve and sixteen are hardly enough. Worthy old Schicht called young Beethoven a musical pig when he first learned to know the broad architectonic composition in the latter's works. He listened to the man of the future with the ear of his own past age, and in so far was quite right. To the people of the earlier period of the eighteenth century Beethoven's works would certainly have seemed unspeakably confused and bombastic, indeed like the products of musical insanity and, moreover, swarming with the worst kind of stylistic and grammatical blunders, as they did indeed appear at times even to the older contemporaries of the master. Little by little, however, it has grown to be rather risky to assert this fact, for every musical ass now argues that *because* his works please nobody, therefore he must be a Beethoven.

The concise thoughts and phrases of the old masters are disturbing to our dreamy musical ear — they are disquieting, they wake us up. Modern musicians are very seldom

able to perform impressively this all too concise style of composition because they are no longer accustomed to interchange *forte* and *piano* and melodic expression in such short musical sentences; they only have ear and hand for very broad periods, yard-long *fortes*, *pianos* and *crescendos*. By far the greater part of the older chamber-music of the eighteenth century has for our ear something soberly rationalistic. Such imitative music in that age compares with modern imitative music as the painted allegories of the Pigtail age compare with the symbolical paintings of Kaulbach. Johann Jacob Frohberger, court organist to the Emperor Ferdinand III., portrayed the dangers which he incurred crossing the Rhine in an —*allemande*. To the ear of his contemporaries this portrayal sounded absolutely plain and intelligible. Dietrich Buxtehude described the nature of the planets in seven suites for the piano. The Hamburg organist, Matthias Weckmann, set the sixty-third chapter of Isaiah to music, and the then celebrated missionary to the Jews, Edzardi, bore him witness that in the bass he had painted the Messiah as plainly as if he had seen Him with his own eyes. We have no longer any ear for the comprehension of such rationalistically allegorized music; indeed, we can understand the ear which a former age possessed for it just as little as we can understand the euphony which the ear of the Middle Ages found in Guido's fourth-harmonies, which now even the dogs cannot put up with.

I shall break off here with the presentation of my documents concerning the alteration of the musical ear. If one tried to expatiate instead of merely suggesting, the sketch would soon grow to be a book.

There is certainly a wonderful charm in conjuring up the spirit of past ages from yellowed sheets of music, and, with the help of historical study, in quiet cozy hours, to tune one's own ear anew, so that it may once more hear in spirit the harmonies which were listened to by generations long since deceased, just as they sounded to the ear of the latter. There is a wonderful charm in searching after the

most secret instinctive tones of the emotional life of a bygone world, the natural sounds of their souls, which are so entirely different from our own and which would be lost for us — since picture and word stand too far off — had they not found fixed expression in musical composition. The character-picture of the last century, as portrayed by the historian of culture, is lacking in that peculiar soulful lustre, that mysterious little luminous point which shines upon the beholder from the eye of a well-painted portrait, if such things as the knowledge of the eye for natural scenery and the ear for music of the age are not included among the features of the character-picture.

THE STRUGGLE OF THE ROCOCO WITH THE PIGTAIL*

By W. H. Riehl

TRANSLATED BY FRANCES H. KING

NO time is so rich as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in humorous original types of a distinct *genre*, who built for themselves a world apart. Everywhere in this period we meet with eccentrics by profession, who with deliberate intention play, as the actors say, a "charged" character-part. Their freaks and gambols were considered worthy to be handed on to posterity in memoirs and books of anecdote, and whoever wanted to be a gentleman was obliged, in some particulars at least, to be a fool. The romantic adventures of the Middle Ages returned again in a new costume, in less fantastic but far more humorous forms; Don Quixote exchanged his helmet for a wig.

For the nineteenth century original types of this kind — where they still happen to exist — are quite adventitious; for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries they were essential.

That capricious glorying in the most baroque personality possible, that leaning toward individual caricature, inborn in the whole age, agrees indeed very well with the arbitrarily fantastic taste of the Rococo period — of the seventeenth century — but it stands in sharpest contrast to the tendency of the Pigtail in the eighteenth. For to prune down the natural growth, to sober down the fantastic, to make the luxurious poor, emaciated, and uniform, and to weave life, art, and science on the same loom of academic rule — all this is a characteristic which distinguishes the

* From *Studies in the Culture of Three Centuries.*

Pigtail from the Rococo. This leaning toward individual caricature nevertheless was maintained throughout the entire age of the Pigtail. Indeed the very figure in the escutcheon of this period, the pigtail of hair, grew out of the contradictory effort to restrain and render uniform the natural luxuriance of the hair, and yet at the same time to append to men's backs a pure freak, a little, absolutely original scroll.

One might say, in short, one extreme challenged the other. When people had banished the old professional clown from the stage, they felt the necessity of running about themselves as clowns. The sober, enlightened age protested against the old folk-tales with goblins, gnomes, elves, and other kindred sprites, but, to make up for it, thousands of living caricatures played in their own rooms the part of goblins and gnomes, and lady shepherdesses appropriated the rôles of the elves, nixies, and nymphs.

This phenomenon, however, leads to facts of much deeper significance for the history of culture. Let us first define the conceptions. The words " rococo " and " pigtail " at first applied only to the plastic arts; we are, however, gradually becoming accustomed to employ them to designate the whole period of culture. That is right and commendable, for those words have been taken from real life, from experience by the senses, whereas, as a rule, we almost always fabricate lifeless scholastic terms for such things.

The Rococo — in the plastic arts — presupposes the Renaissance, and I believe it has even been called the Renaissance gone crazy. One might say more justly that when the Renaissance got intoxicated it became the Rococo. And if the Rococo is the drunken debauch of the Renaissance then the Pigtail would be the seediness which follows after it.

But I must rein in my steed to a quieter pace and give a more scholastic definition.

In the Renaissance, antique forms were born again, at first within and beside the medieval, finally replacing them entirely. But the new age of the sixteenth century had new

needs, new senses, new passions, which the antique could satisfy no more fully than could the Gothic. When a person is no longer an old Roman he cannot quite build and fashion like the old Romans. For this reason the antique was pulled and stretched and fitted on the new man as well as could be managed. It is, however, just as hard to adapt forms of art as to alter coats which have been cut out for some one else's body. Only a few of the greatest architects and sculptors succeeded for a little while in reconciling the inner contradiction between the new life and the old art. No period of art had so short a flourishing period as the genuine Renaissance; when it came into the world it bore the birthmark of mannerism on its forehead.

This mannerism in its fulness and maturity is the Rococo. The burly men and women bubbling over with life, in whom the stormy spirit of the age of discovery and invention, of social revolution and religious reformation, had not yet spent itself, finding the forms of the antique too confined and yet not wishing to give them up, pulled and stretched them, added to them scrolls and crossettes, nay, even shattered them to fragments and then held fast to their ruins, indeed even went so far as to find these caricatures and ruins more beautiful than the original. The Rococo is violent in chains, insolent in constraint, drunken in sobriety. It is the art of a rich, voluptuous, mystic, restless age.

Then came war and desolation, poverty and misery. Decadent men become dry and pedantic. Oppression and tyranny without engender pedagogism within. Thus the art of the Rococo became in the eighteenth century poor, sober, squeezed into rules, deprived of every passionate impulse which formerly might have reconciled us to its efflorescence. Mannerists of genius can glitter alluringly, pedantic ones are deterringly boring. The Pigtail is the dried-up Rococo, trimmed according to academic rules. The luxurious Rococo flora, composed of all kinds of plants, poisonous herbs, and weeds is presented to us, in the age of the Pigtail, as a dead herbarium on blotting-paper.

The periods of the history of art are measured only in round numbers. Thus the plastic artist may well say that the Renaissance belongs to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Baroque to the seventeenth, and the Rococo and the Pigtail to the eighteenth. But for the historian of culture, on the other hand, this calculation is a little too round. German literature during a good part of the Rococo period already belongs to the Pigtail, and it frees itself from the Pigtail in the very densest Pigtail period of the architect and the sculptor. Palestrina and Orlando di Lasso represent the aftermath of the Middle Ages in the period of the Renaissance; Händel and Bach, in the eighteenth century, would have stood much closer to the Rococo than to the Pigtail, if they had not been such original and peculiar geniuses that one cannot quite classify them under these heads at all.

And yet the Rococo strikes a key-note which resounds through the whole history of culture of the seventeenth century, just as the Pigtail does through that of the eighteenth. On that account one need not give up the general character of the period, and yet one can see how the Rococo still presses forward in the Pigtail age. For in the battle of spirits the columns do not advance with even step and even front like the battalions on the parade ground, but here the file-leaders are often a century in advance of the centre.

When, therefore, the history of art and morals of the previous century shows us how at that time discordant spirits nevertheless wrestled with one another on common ground, the excess of fantastic arbitrariness with the most sober, universal pedantry, I call it simply a struggle of the Rococo with the Pigtail.

Men despised real history and broke with it, to be subjected all the more to the tyranny of historical ghosts. While the poets were fettered in blind worship of the unities of Aristotle as of a fundamental historical law, Houdart, without understanding a word of Greek, corrected Homer, whose poetry did not seem to conform sufficiently to rule.

In the characters of the great sovereigns of the eighteenth century, who created new, stricter, more regular forms of government, the same contrast appears between personal arbitrariness and devotion to this universal law founded by them. Frederick the Great, Joseph II., Catherine of Russia, Maria Theresa, Charles XII., Peter the Great, could none of them quite escape from the eccentricity which was considered the necessary attribute of genius. They furnished material, therefore, for countless anecdotes; by personal whims, freaks, and caprices they freed themselves at times from the new spirit of social uniformity and political legal equality. One could not reconcile such anecdote-business with the picture of the antique and medieval hero-kings. In the last two centuries, on the contrary, a king had to be witty if his greatness was not to be considered tedious by the people of the Pigtail. The scandalous chronicle of the Courts was at least as important as the political chronicles of the kingdoms. Through his mother-wit and his good jokes Old Fritz became a popular figure even among his adversaries, and among the people outside of Prussia he still lives on today in the anecdotes of his private life rather than in his princely actions. All the kings and heroes of the Rococo age therefore are rather material for the historical *genre* picture of the novel and the comedy, than for the genuine historical picture of the epic and the tragedy. One can fully characterize them only by painting a hundred individual traits expressive of their peculiarity and their caprice, and this is incompatible with the great epic style. It is by no means accidental that Scherenberg is unable to get away from the most arbitrary crabbed versification in his historical *genre* poems celebrating Frederick the Great. The capricious heroes with pigtails do not tolerate smooth verses. The favorite verse-form of their day, however, the stiff alexandrine, characterizes the Pigtail exclusively, not the Rococo.

The small princes imitated the great, and what in the latter had been original traits of character, became in the

former amusing caricatures. The one copies Peter the Great's wedding of dwarfs; the other the giant guard of Frederick Wilhelm I. A prince with such a wonderful passion for the bass viol as Duke Maurice of Saxe-Merseburg, who even laid a small bass viol in the cradle of his new-born daughter, was possible only in the eighteenth century. It may be that his subjects did not even call him a fool, but only a man of princely whims. A prince who wields the fiddle-bow instead of the sceptre and thereby keeps his hands "clean from blood and ink atrocities," is a true representative of the Rococo, not of the Pigtail. That Landgrave of Hesse who wished to create a second Potsdam in Pirmasens, and was made blissful by the thought that he could hold his court in the tobacco-reeking guard-room, who celebrated the greatest triumph of his reign when he had his entire grenadier regiment manœuvre in the pitch-dark drill-hall without the least disorder occurring in the ranks, he is a real Rococo figure, for by his mad fancies he humorously destroyed the long pigtail appended to his actions.

A prince in those days had to be a virtuoso of personality. At the same time the etiquette of the Courts, which amounted to the most rigid conformity to rules, formed a strange contradiction to the ambition of the individual prince to shine as an original. It is this same contradiction which also characterizes the art and science of that time, the contradiction between academic conformity to rules and the most arbitrary scroll work, the contradiction between the Pigtail and the Rococo. An old hack-blade of a German prince of the Empire, finding at a state dinner that a foreign prince had loaded too much meat upon his plate, without more ado took away half of it, and this incident admirably denotes the struggle of the age between arbitrariness and etiquette. In order to revenge the slight offense committed against etiquette by the prince, and guest, the host is guilty of a far greater one, and his act was without doubt admired as a real stroke of genius.

In the highest circles of society people often believed they could not amuse themselves better than by voluntarily submitting to the most severe despotism of an external constraint, in order to allow the utmost latitude to personal whims. Herein lies the colossal humor, the deep self-mockery of the age. One of the most remarkable monuments of this self-mockery was founded by a Margrave of Baireuth in the Hermitage near Baireuth. In order to enjoy the pleasures of a sojourn in the country the whole Court had to play at being monks and nuns. By silence and solitude, by painfully shackling themselves with all sorts of wearisome rules imitated from religious orders, the "hermits" had to prepare for social pleasures and Court festivities. In order to enjoy Court life in a new way people disguised it under the serious mask of the cloister; people tortured and bored themselves in order to be merry, and buckled social intercourse into a strait-jacket, in order to give it the appearance of an entirely new and free movement.

Even German Pietism, which in the beginning of the eighteenth century gained so many adherents in the world of fashion, showed a piece of Rococo in the Pigtail. It, too, was founded, in part, on a mixture of the most subjective freedom and arbitrariness with the most rigid constraint of a new religious order; therefore it often appeared revolutionary, reformatory, and reactionary, all at the same time. They burst the fetters of benumbed dogmatism and petrified church government in order to inclose every free breath in new fetters. Even the last, most involuntary act of life — dying — had to be performed systematically. Pietistic literature of this time produced a work in four volumes which, with the most minute detail, submits the last hours of fifty-one lately departed persons to a sort of comparative anatomy, so that people could learn from it, scholastically as it were, the best way to die. The author of this work, a Count von Henkel, congratulates a friend, who had been a witness of the "instructive death" of a certain Herr von Geusau, in these words: "It was worth

while to have heard a *Collegium privatissimum* on the art of dying like a Christian, especially from such a *professore moribundo.*"

The French Neo-Romanticists, who declare war in the most decided manner against all literary traditions of the eighteenth century, nevertheless absolutely revel in material furnished by that time; the gentlemen in wigs have become their most profitable heroes, and in real life, as well as in our novels, we can find no more modern way to decorate our parlors and our furniture than by covering them with the scroll work of the wig-age. This is only an apparent contradiction. It is not the Pigtail but the Rococo that we are reviving so industriously, not the academic constraint of rules, but the subjective arbitrariness, the spirit of the original, freakish types. This untrammeled caprice of the Rococo age seems to us as fresh as nature compared with the well planned symmetry of our modern conditions, which no longer permit one to be a real fool, and therefore do not allow any dazzling figures of romance to come to the surface, just as the eighteenth century, on its part, no longer engendered any real dramatic characters. If Rousseau, as soon as the spirit of coarseness came over him, hurls the most spirited abuse at everybody, if the peasant poet, Robert Burns, "a giant original man," as Thomas Carlyle calls him, suddenly appearing among the puppets and buffoons of the eighteenth century, is gaped at like a curiosity in the salons of Edinburgh on account of his rough simple nature, then we too can find delight in the natural strength which is hidden in the Pigtail under the form of the Rococo. Even the historian of art, who grows indignant over the extinction of the historic sense in that age, over the vandalism with which an arrogant lack of understanding destroyed the monuments of the Middle Ages — even he must, at the same time, admire the self consciousness which speaks in this vandalism, the defiant belief in the wisdom of their own age, which boldly remolded everything to suit their own taste because they were finally persuaded that this taste was the only true one. It is a pecu-

liar sign of conscious strength and of vitality breaking out in the midst of the sickly life of a degenerate age. We can almost envy the old pigtails for this blind belief in themselves, which grows out of the boastful arbitrariness of the Rococo, in the midst of and in spite of the constraint of the Pigtail, and is closely connected with the mad cult of originality practised by so many individual types. We have strong doubts concerning the excellence of our advanced mental development, while in the days of our great-grandfathers nobody doubted that that age, which we properly stigmatize with the sobriquet of the Pigtail Age, was really the golden age of art and science.

Our South-German peasants still live completely in the Rococo as regards artistic taste. They have forgotten the Middle Ages and have not yet found modern art. To the peasant of the Black Forest, the splendid, baroque, dome-shaped church of St. Blasien is a much greater marvel of native art than the Freiburg cathedral. Gaudy, exaggeratedly fantastic Rococo saints are generally considered by Catholic country people very much more edifying than a picture in the severe style of the Middle Ages or of the modern school. In the ornamentation of utensils and houses of our peasants the Rococo style has quite naïvely been carried along into our own times, and whoever nowadays wishes to have genuine Rococo chairs in his parlor not infrequently searches through the peasants' houses. The pleasure which the peasant takes in the Rococo, which has bravely survived so many changes in taste, is easily explained. The peasant himself is an original, rather, 'tis true, as a species than individually, and the brilliant, fantastic, affected, violent quality of the Rococo appealed to his rough, sturdy child's nature, just like large capital letters. On the other hand he never sympathized with the genuine Pigtail. The scant, niggardly dress-coat of this period was never adopted as the prevailing costume of the people, any more than the fashion of wearing the hair in a real pigtail, and the bare façades of the academic Pigtail architecture never became epoch-making in popular archi-

tecture. The peasant only appropriated to himself the Rococo out of the Pigtail of the last century.

We pedantic city people, on the contrary, in the outer construction of our houses, in their joiner-like, barrack architecture with the monotonous rows of windows, have all this time remained prisoners of the Pigtail; but in the gaudy, whimsical decoration of our rooms, on the other hand, we have reached the Rococo once more, and only very recently have we begun to improve by going back to the powerful individualism of the Renaissance — as, for instance, in many of the new streets in Munich. There is, however, nothing adventitious about this, for, in general, a more personal, original life is flourishing in our *bourgeoisie* than there was twenty years ago.

In the Rococo period there was an endless amount of portrait painting, and this partiality to having one's picture done in oils, pastel, engraving, in silhouette and in miniature medallion, maintained itself throughout the entire Pigtail period. It was conformable to the spirit of the times and to one's rank to look upon one's own features as something not to be despised, and not a soul suspected that there was any personal vanity in it.

In the same way that people had their portraits executed by the engraver, they also liked to depict their own likeness in their letters, diaries, and memoirs. The custom came to us from the French in the seventeenth century, and, as a real child of the Rococo, triumphantly survived the struggle with the Pigtail, and lasted on into the nineteenth century. No man nowadays can carry on such extensive friendly correspondence as was universally carried on from fifty to a hundred years ago. This self-inspection, this importance attached to little personalities, disgusts us. The letters of Gleim, Heinse, Jacobi, Johannes Müller suffice to make us feel fully conscious of this disgust. We should now call the man a coxcomb who considered his precious ego so important that he had to carry on, year in and year out, a yard-long correspondence about himself. General interests have grown, private interests have shriveled up,

but thereby, indeed, the original types of the old days have become impossible.

That strange union of charlatanism and science, of prognosticating mysticism and sharp-eyed observation which in the Renaissance had, as it were, become incorporated in large learned guilds, such as the astrologers, alchemists, theosophists, etc., dies away in the Rococo period in isolated strange individuals. Mesmer, Lavater, Athanasius Kircher, Cagliostro are such Rococo figures in the very midst of the Pigtail. Professor Beireis, in Helmstädt, who in the eighteenth century still tried his hand at making gold, carried on an incredible jugglery with his collection of curios and made his enlightened contemporaries believe that he possessed a diamond weighing six thousand four hundred carats, which the Emperor of China had pawned with him, would, in former times, if he had not been duly burned as a magician, have become the head of a school. In the eighteenth century he merely remained a mysterious eccentric type whose gaudy collection was gazed upon with astonishment by all travelers, half charlatan, half savant — in any case, however, a marvelous virtuoso of personality. In our day even such an isolated original type would no longer be possible at all. It is thoroughly Rococo.

The Middle Ages had had its guild secrets. In the period of the Rococo a trading in secrets by individual scholars and artists had grown out of it. Among the painters and musicians especially, even the smallest master carried on his particular legerdemain with the "secrets" of art, which he alone ostensibly possessed and communicated only to his pupils.

The profession of court fool had died out. In its place the individual geniuses of folly appeared in the Rococo age, such as Gundeling, the passive clown, who was made a fool of by others, and Kyau, the Eulenspiegel of the eighteenth century, who himself hoaxed other people. In the learned Athanasius Kircher the charlatan of genius struggles continually with the pedant; that is the great struggle which

continued throughout the entire age, in religion, art, science, and statecraft — the struggle of the Rococo with the Pigtail. The repugnant inner lack of truthfulness of so many important personages of this age has its roots in this unadjusted struggle. In order to appear a real original, one dared not be quite simple, truthful, and open. Münchhausen, the notorious liar, is a genuine Rococo caricature in the Pigtail age.

The most original of all the original people in those days ended up as caricatures. The Rococo is the conscious humor of the Pigtail; for that reason it can still be used artistically today, whereas the Pigtail, which is totally lacking in the humor of self-knowledge, has long been artistically dead. Even today when a *genre*-painter wishes to paint real lifelike caricatures he paints them in Rococo costume. Hasenclever's Hieronymus Jobs, for example, would appear to us absolutely exaggerated, if the figures in these pictures did not wear pigtails and wigs. Only in this unique age of the Rococo does it seem to us possible that such freaks could have walked the earth in the flesh. And we are not wrong in so thinking; for the mania to be an original type, a virtuoso of personality, in that day turned innumerable persons into genuine caricatures. A certain Count von Hoditz, in the middle of the eighteenth century, founded a so-called "Maria Theresa sheep-farm" (in honor of the Empress) on his estate Roswalde, in Silesia, and here his subjects and villeins had to play at Greece and Rome, year in and year out. Temples were erected to Thetis, Diana, Flora, etc., and peasants went about dressed up as haruspices and augurs. The Pontifex slaughtered a sheep on the sacrificial altar, the oracle was consulted in a cave, and in a temple dedicated to the sun young priests kept up an ever-flaming fire. On this estate an actor was master of the hunt, librarian, theatre director, high priest of the sun and — schoolmaster, all in his own person; and Frederick the Great was so pleased with the Silesian Arcadia that he celebrated it in a poetic epistle. If one tried nowadays to give an accurate description of this bare reality in a novel

it would look like the most exaggerated caricature. The Rococo, however, can bear the strongest laying on of color and the most distorted forms. It was not without some reason that, in those days, they loved to chisel or carve on every house door and on the neck of every violin a hideous face which is making grimaces and sticking out its tongue. Many of the figures in Molière's and Holberg's comedies, and in the innumerable farces written in imitation of them in the eighteenth century, now appear to us clumsy, extravagant caricatures. But if we recall such historical phenomena as the above-mentioned Maria Theresa sheep-farm, we will find that for their age the clumsy figures were well portrayed characteristic types, far rather than caricatures. In them is mirrored the unmanageable eccentricity of the more original persons in the Pigtail age, so abounding in constraint and training.

Without this contrast of arbitrariness and restraint, which presents itself under the form of a struggle of the Rococo with the Pigtail, the history of culture, and still more the history of art, of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, is quite incomprehensible. The great political revolution of the nineties could never have been a product of the rigid Pigtail age, but it could very well have been a result of the Rococo in the Pigtail. In the Rococo there was still life, mad, ungovernable life; the Pigtail always had a Hippocratic face. The virtuosos of personality, the strange Rococo original types, were the forbears of the literary Storm and Stress writers, the artistic reformers, the big and little demagogues. The pedants of the Pigtail, on the other hand, were the prophets of the pipe-clay, the bureaucracy, the rationalistic mechanical training of young and old in church and school. And this contrast of the Rococo and the Pigtail still continues today, but veiled and in a new garment, not only on and in our houses but also in our public and private life. The genuine original types of the Rococo, however, the fantastic virtuosos of personality, have, indeed, long since been gathered to their fathers and will not return.

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